



# La Verna E-Vision

*Be the bridge to Fraternal Life*

Vol. 1

Summer

2019



## ***Minister's Message***

by Jeff Gumz, OFS  
La Verna Region Minister

My brothers and sisters in  
St. Francis,

The La Verna Region Vision Statement states : *"We, the Secular Franciscans of the La Verna Region, commit ourselves to our Order on all its levels by faithfully following our Rule and the charism of Sts. Francis and Clare to see the face of God in all creation through dynamic formation, profound spirituality and joyful vocation."* The Regional Executive Council (REC) continues to focus on increased recruitment of new members, enhancing the quality of our ongoing formation to stretch our Gospel-living potential, the fraternal spirit which will help us all to create and seek out ways to pattern our lives after Christ in the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi. Our Vice Minister, Bob Crane, OFS, continues his work on the vision committee with a focus on increased recruitment to the Secular Franciscan Order. Bob received some great feedback during the breakout session at our Chapter in June. We don't want to see the order die away.

At our 2019 Chapter in Marathon from June 21-23, we were visited by Mary Bittner, OFS. Mary serves our Order as the National Vice Minister of OFS-USA. According to Rule 26 of the Secular Franciscan Order and our Constitution, *"The purpose of both the pastoral and fraternal visits is to revive the evangelical Franciscan spirit, to assure fidelity to the charism and to the Rule, to offer help to fraternity life, to reinforce the bond of the unity of the Order, and to promote its most effective insertion into the Franciscan family and the Church."*

Mary had some high praise for the La Verna Region. She said we rank in the top 20% of Regions in terms of living out our Franciscan Vocation. Some other words of advice from Mary. She told the REC not to worry about numbers (vocations). Sometimes we get so caught up in increasing our numbers that we lose focus on formation and spirituality. Mary warned us that a hyper sensitivity to increasing numbers can lead to a couple problems. First, it can become a crutch: *We are too old, we don't have any new members, we can't do anything.* These are all excuses that can lead to paralysis in a Fraternity. Second, in our desire to increase the membership of the order, we may start bringing people into the order who do not have a true Franciscan vocation. Mary shared stories with the REC about her experiences with this on a national level. The Local Councils need to be part of the Formation process to help determine the true vocation of each their candidates.

Another topic Mary discussed with the REC was politics. Mary stated that our National Fraternity, OFS-USA, does not endorse nor call out specific

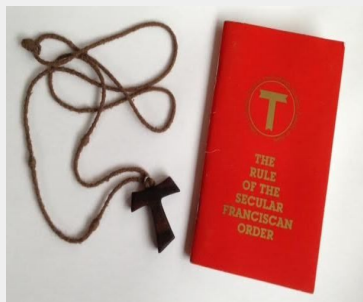
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political candidates. Our Region follows OFS-USA's lead. We have never endorsed nor called out specific political candidates either. We will always teach our members through Catholic Social Teaching and Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC). We also encourage our members to form their own consciousness based on Catholic Social Teaching and participate in their civic duty by voting.

The focus of the 2019 District Gatherings was celebrating the 40th anniversary our beautiful rule. Our General Minister (International Level) and brother, Tibor Kauser, OFS, recently wrote about the rule - "Before all, the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order is a treasure, a gift of God, that



shows how much God and the Church loves the Secular Franciscan Order. It is something that cannot be bought, cannot be merited. Like every gift, it is somehow bearing the imprint of the giver,

showing us how beautiful and rich life God wants us to live. Each and every article of the Rule reflects on the infinite richness of God, and is like a gemstone that puts light on various aspects of our identity and of our life. When we now celebrate the 40th anniversary of our Rule, we have to remember, that it is not the gift itself, what we celebrate, but the giver, who is God himself."

The District Gatherings began with the singing of our national anthem which was part of Sharon's presentation on the Spirit of Fraternity. Our Spiritual Assistants, Ed and Lee Ann, spoke about being the Guardian of the Rule. One person said, "Liked Lee Ann's presentation about God's love because it helped connect me in a powerful way..." Teri Doughty, OFS, spoke from the heart and touched many with her presentation on conversion. Nick Crane, OFS, got everyone dancing and moving with joy during his talk on the Different Aspects of Franciscan Service.

The 3rd Annual La Verna Formation Workshop will take place on Saturday, September 14-15, 2019 at the St. Anthony Spirituality Center in Marathon WI. Our Regional Formation Director, JoAnn Boss, spoke about the formation process in our region, "My



*rapport as the Regional Formator with local Formators is deepening a relationship, and developing a full formation process. On a whole, local fraternities are more aware of a consistent, unified and worldwide perspective to formation.*" We received exciting news from the Board of Trustees of the Duns Scotus Secular Franciscan Formation Trust Fund. We have received a grant in the amount of \$2,268.00 to support your region's formation workshops. Our Region is so blessed!

On the spirituality side, the Spiritual Assistant School continues to offer workshops twice a year at St. Anthony Spirituality Center in Marathon. The workshop is for all certified Spiritual Assistants, who are currently serving, and for those who are in training to become a SA. If you are interested in becoming a Spiritual Assistant, a minimum of 5-years of living as a professed Secular Franciscan is needed along with service on Fraternity Councils.

One of the concerns of the REC is future leadership. Next year, we will be celebrating our Regional Chapter of Elections. At Chapter, Lora Hainy, OFS, Mary Jane Henning, OFS and Sue Spencer. OFS, have volunteered to serve on the nomination committee, whose job is to obtain a slate of nominees who are interested in serving on the REC. From our Constitution, Article 31, Item 2: "The office of minister or councilor is a fraternal service, a commitment to hold oneself available and responsible in relation to each brother and sister and to the fraternity so that each one will realize his or her own vocation and each fraternity will be a true community, ecclesial and Franciscan, actively present in the Church and in society."

I encourage all of you to prayerfully consider running for a position on the REC.



The La Verna Region of the Secular Franciscan Order in the USA consists of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. The region's geographical area is divided into three districts: Southeast, Central, Fox Valley. The La Verna E-Vision newsletter is published three times a year, is a communication vehicle with the La Verna Region, and presents information that relate to the Secular Franciscan Order way of life.

Permission to copy materials printed in *La Verna E-Vision* is given freely except where the copyright is specifically reserved to the author or artist. *La Verna E-Vision* editors: Ed Boss, OFS, [ed-joann@att.net](mailto:ed-joann@att.net) and Jeff Gumz, OFS, [jagumz@gmail.com](mailto:jagumz@gmail.com)

For further information about the La Verna Region and the Secular Franciscan Order, please go to the internet site: [www.lavernasecularfranciscans.com](http://www.lavernasecularfranciscans.com)

For current LaVerna Region events, information  
and news, please check out our website

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## *The La Verna Regional Executive Council*

The REC is here to help your Fraternity in any way possible. Do not hesitate to email or call any member of the REC with a concern you may have. Current members of the REC are:

**Minister** = Jeff Gumz, OFS -

[jagumz@gmail.com](mailto:jagumz@gmail.com), 920-393-9087

**Vice Minister** - Bob Crane, OFS -

[bobcrane.ofs@gmail.com](mailto:bobcrane.ofs@gmail.com), 715-204-9671

**Secretary** - Kathy Sutliff, OFS -

[katsut@charter.net](mailto:katsut@charter.net), 715-369-3367

**Treasurer** = Bob Henning, OFS -

[BMJHSFO@AOL.COM](mailto:BMJHSFO@AOL.COM), 906-273-0374

**Councilor** - Peter Bekkers, OFS -

[taxmannatp@gmail.com](mailto:taxmannatp@gmail.com), 920-757-9027

**Councilor** - Nick Crane, OFS -

[ncranewms@gmail.com](mailto:ncranewms@gmail.com), 715-204-4113

**Councilor** - Sharon Dale, OFS -

[shadale@wctc.net](mailto:shadale@wctc.net), 715-423-4136

**Councilor** - Teri Doughty, OFS -

[OFS4TERI@GMAIL.COM](mailto:OFS4TERI@GMAIL.COM), 920-231-4838

**Regional Spiritual Assistant** -

Ed Boss, OFS - [ed-joann@att.net](mailto:ed-joann@att.net),  
262 250-9251

**Regional Spiritual Assistant** -

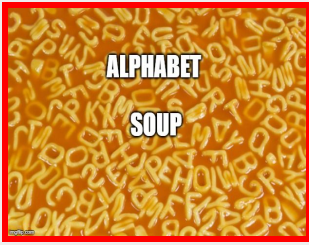
Lee Ann Niebuhr, OFS -  
[lamniebuhr@gmail.com](mailto:lamniebuhr@gmail.com) 715 356-1009

**Formation Director** = Joann Boss, OFS

[jboss@my.wctc.edu](mailto:jboss@my.wctc.edu) 262 250-9251







It may seem like an alphabet soup when it comes to the number of acronyms we use as Secular Franciscans. Below are a few of the more common ones.

**OFS: Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis**

**OFS-USA** refers to our Secular Franciscan Order - USA distinguishing it specific from other National Fraternities

**NAFRA** refers to National Fraternity. We are encouraged to use OFS-USA when we talk about our National Fraternity, but you will hear a few old timers slip up and call it NAFRA.

**CIOFS** refers to the International OFS Council: Consilium Internationale Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis  
[www.ciofs.org](http://www.ciofs.org)

**REC** refers to Regional Executive Council

**NEC** refers to National Executive Council. The NEC's main e-mail is [NEC.OFS.USA@gmail.com](mailto:NEC.OFS.USA@gmail.com)

**CNSA** refers to the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants. The CSNA is the four spiritual assistants, one from each friar obedience (Order of Friars Minor, OFM Capuchin, OFM Conventual, and Third Order Regular), who provide assistance to the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States.

**MOTO** refers to Management of the Order, our worldwide Secular Franciscan Order

**JPIC** stands for Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation. For us Seculars, JPIC is simply our rule in action.

## Our Daily Franciscan Pilgrimage Is Not An Invisible Walk

"O God, holy are your ways."

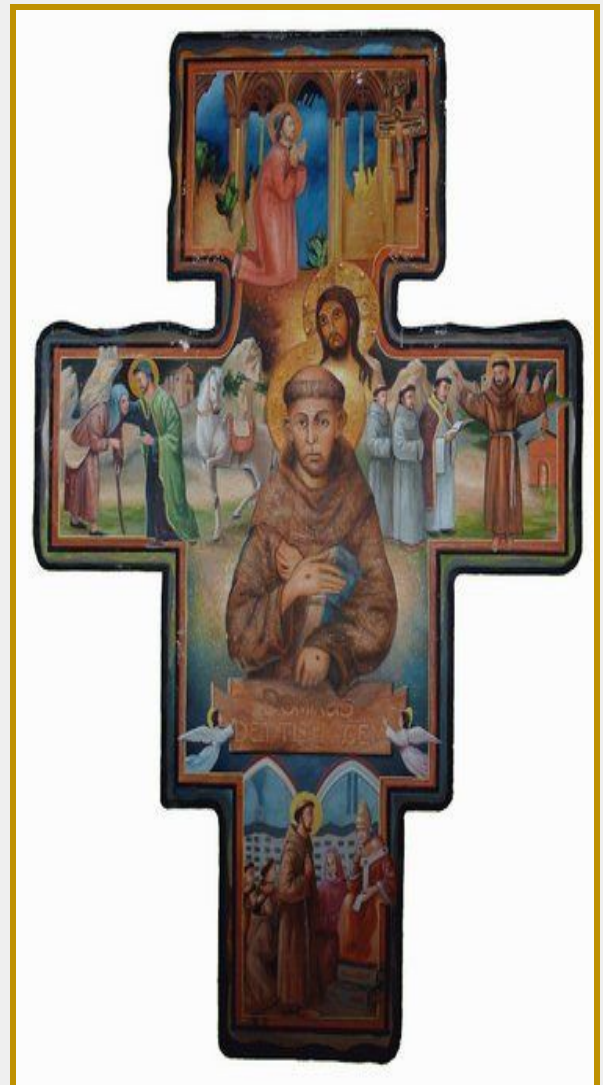
Holy is the pilgrimage of life toward you  
and the way from captivity to freedom.  
Holy, holy is the Lord,  
for eternal is his love!

Holy is the joy that stirs me with enthusiasm  
and makes me run swiftly on your road.  
Holy, holy is the Lord,  
for eternal is his love!

Holy are the troubles that crush me  
with weariness  
and slow down my progress toward you.  
Holy, holy is the Lord,  
for eternal is his love!

Holy are the meetings with friends,  
who journey with me toward your dwelling.  
Holy, holy is the Lord,  
for eternal is his love!

Holy too is the death that awaits me at the road's end  
for then I will be at the end of my pilgrimage, at home!  
Holy, holy is the Lord,  
for eternal is his love!





## *Living the Gospel through our Roles and Responsibilities*

CIOFS Formation Team, *VOX Franciscana* newsletter, SUMMER 2019 edition [page 23]

As an Order, we are actively integrated in the life of Christ. We are part of the body of Christ. The promise we made when we were professed requires us to be more proactive, more focused on Christ's mission on earth.

Further, we have a very specific hierarchical structure centered on having a council at each level which helps to animate and guide the life of Secular Franciscan brothers and sisters – to help us live our Franciscan charism in family, in fraternity and in society.

Let's take that concept that we are part of the body of Christ a little further. We might consider the Executive Council at each level as Christ's heart – which pumps life-giving blood throughout the Franciscan body.

Whether we serve as officers at the local, regional, national or international level, we are co-responsible for animating and guiding our fraternities and members.

By properly fulfilling our unique roles on the council, we will ensure that the brothers and sisters receive support and guidance to live their Secular Franciscan life as the Rule requires of them. The council should be united in vision and ministry – especially after actions and plans are voted on.

One final note: As international, national, regional and local fraternities, we are not islands. We are intricately woven together as a magnificent tapestry that covers the body of Christ around the world – and our councils provide that important thread that ties us together.

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## *Announcing Our New Fraternity Mapping Tool*

By Jane DeRose-Bamman, OFS  
National Secretary OFS-USA



My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Early this year, Jan Parker, our National Minister, asked Regional Ministers to provide basic information about our local fraternities gathering dates and locations so we could map them on the OFS USA website. At long last, we have a visual tool showing every Local Fraternity on a map!

The beauty of this achievement is one need only to enter a City/State and the map will pinpoint close by fraternities. Contact information for each region is listed. This information will need to be updated periodically, but it is a terrific start.

Thanks to the Regional Ministers (or delegates) for providing the information and Lee Potts, OFS, for putting together the mapping tool.

We'll be posting an announcement on the website, Facebook and Twitter....so feel free to help us spread the word. Test it out and let us know what you think.

**To call up the map and locate your fraternity or a fraternity, you may wish to visit go to**

...<https://secularfranciscansusa.org/map-of-local-fraternities>

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## *News from around the La Verna Region*

### Profession at St. Ann Fraternity

On June 2, 2019 St. Ann Fraternity in Green Bay celebrated the Rite of Profession of Neil J. Saindon, OFS. Welcome to the Franciscan Family! Neil is flanked to his right by La Verna Regional Minister, Jeff Gumz, OFS and to his left by St. Ann Fraternity Minister, Jack Boerschinger, OFS.



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### Southeastern District 'Umbrella Fraternity' Meets Again

Is it *really* possible that Secular Franciscans can gather without an agenda, without taking notes, and without sitting in a classroom style setting and still feel connected?

Oh heavens yes!

Our first umbrella fraternity gathering took place in January 2019 at Ed and JoAnn's home in Sussex, WI. On that day, the afternoon weather was bitterly cold, but the few members who braved the Wisconsin winter elements, arrived and spent about three hours exchanging holiday conversations and friendships. Also, lots of sinful and healthy treats were exchanged. By the end of the social gathering, it was agreed to hold more informal gatherings for the southeast district members. Hence, the umbrella icon represents no formal agendas or theological navel gazing to rain on and overwhelm a relaxed get together.



Our second Umbrella Fraternity gathering was held on July 20 when the outside summer temperature was hot and steamy. But the heat didn't stop ten brothers and sisters from gathering in air conditioned comfort in Audrey Ricard's South Milwaukee home to share Franciscan love, friendship and, of course, snacks. The brothers and sisters were from St. Francis of Assisi fraternity, St. Josaphat fraternity and St. Paschal Baylon fraternity.

Carol, John, Brian, Charlie, Donna, Beth, Joe, Ed, JoAnn and Audrey, members from southeastern local fraternities, spent time getting to know one another in an informal and relaxed setting. Throughout the afternoon, we listened and laughed and shared stories with attentiveness. This type of positive experience builds fraternal community and it will be shared again in the Fall. And the spirit will be there in a joyful presence.

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### Portiuncula Day of Celebration

On August 4, OFS fraternity members from Portiuncula (Franklin), St. Paschal Baylon (Wind Lake), and Sts. Francis and St. Clare cell (Madison) prayed together inside the Portiuncula chapel located in Burlington, WI. The special gathering included Mass in honor of Our Lady of the Angels of the Portiuncula, and the Mass celebrant was Fr. Greg Palata, OFM, who is spiritual assistant with Portiuncula fraternity. The Portiuncula celebration also included a delicious potluck feast held with OFM friars at the Queen of Peace Friary, located on the grounds next to the chapel.

St. Francis was especially fond of the Chapel of Saint Mary of the Angels, known as the Portiuncula. Here the Franciscan Order had its beginning; here Clare was received; and here Francis died.





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# *A Brief History in Time and Update On Our Region Archives*

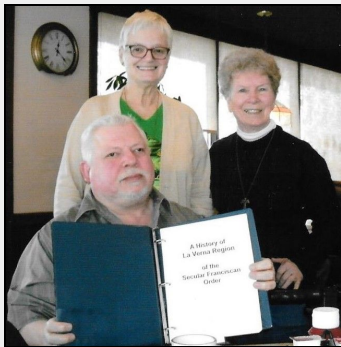
by Sharon Dale, OFS

Since establishing the role as LaVerna Region Archivist in 2015, we successfully obtained nearly all of our stored documents from homes, garages, churches, and even a courthouse. Sadly, some older information was lost. Well intentioned members knew that important fraternity records need to be preserved, but they may have moved or passed away. At the time, we did not have a central location for safe, secure storage for historical documents and papers.

Former La Verna Region Minister Jim Carlson and archivist team members appealed to parishes, churches, schools, convents and rectories in search of a place available for storage.

During our search for a central storage location, I was serving as La Verna Region Councilor and was appointed as Regional Archivist. Soon after, the St. Anthony Spirituality Center (SAC) in Marathon, Wisconsin, offered us an archivist storage space area located in their old basement.

Ken Beattie (seated center), Teri Doughty (top left), Jim Carlson (missing from photo) and I (Sharon Dale) comprised of the archivist team. We moved bins and boxes into the SAC storage basement, and then began sorting pertinent information. I also took carloads of boxes into my home where I



scanned hundreds (thousands?) of papers onto a portable external hard-drive.

After several months work, an *Archivist Directory of Documents* was created listing over 50 separate files: Pre-Region documents, letters, district gatherings, annual Chapters and more. There are listings of past La Verna Region officers and our local fraternity histories. It became apparent that our basement

storage archive area was not sufficient to meet our growing needs. This prompted us to work with SAC director Lori Randall who provided us with a lovely room in the Spirituality Center's "new wing," where we now have two steel file cabinets, a desk, a work table for sorting, and a bookcase.



In addition, we recently located the original wooden Regional Tau cross. The cross was displayed in Stevens Point during the Spring 1996 ceremony proclaiming the becoming of our La Verna Region. The same Tau cross stands in our SAC archive room.

In 1996, Carol Nickash (left), Ken Beattie (center) and Kathy Sutliff (right) all attended that special ceremony which marked the commencement of the La Verna Region.

Twenty-two years later, during the 2018 La Verna Regional Chapter, the three OFS members got together and posed for a nostalgic photo



op with the same regional Tau cross. The Tau cross will be put on display at all future OFS La Verna Region Chapters.

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## THE FRANCISCAN STOMACH IS A WONDERFUL THING!

(the unofficial addendum to the life of St. Francis of Assisi)

by Don Derozier, OFS

Sacred Heart Fraternity, Oshkosh, WI

It is probable that Francis changed his appreciation for bodily systems over time during his conversion. However, both the first biography written by Thomas of Celano, and the beatified version of St. Bonaventure at the time of canonization, fail to note how Francis felt about his stomach.

There are references to other organs however. Celano indicates that Francis' vanity was seen by **eyes** that gazed upon his **facial** good looks and the display of rich, soft clothes that covered his **skin** as he prepared to party with his friends. And of course, his affability, with **arms and hands** hugging and high-fiving his buddies, and perhaps an occasional maiden or two, as they all light-**footed** their way through the streets of Assisi in search of fun.

No doubt there were **nervous** sparks for his **heart and lungs** as he ran up the hills; and splashes from the **hormonal system** which Celano calls the "foolishness of youth, that stirs up the venom of the serpent of old."

Francis sang with **vocal cords** and had **ears** that heard the refrain; he tasted bread and wine with his **throat and tongue**; later, with his **lips**, the sweet kiss of a leper. Still later, his **nostrils** filled with the earthy smells of pigs and pen at Rivo Torto, and the garbage **mouthed** in mendicant gratitude. Finally, his '**sweet-tooth**' for the almond and honey cookies of Lady Jacoba.

So, in spite of the fact that he couldn't stomach the bitter gall of sin, and he got sick to his stomach when brothers rebelled against the rule, and the abuse of the poor was difficult to digest, Francis seems to have taken his own stomach for granted.

This is surprising,  
for an Italian.



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## *Upcoming La Verna Region and National Events*

- 3rd annual formation workshop for local formators & newly professed, September 14 - 15, 2019 at the St. Anthony Spirituality Center, Marathon, WI
- National Chapter - October 15 - 20, 2019, Corpus Christi, TX
- La verna Region: REC planning weekend - October 25 - 27, 2019, Marywood Spirituality Center, Abor Vitae, WI
- Spiritual Assistant's workshop - November 3 - 4, 2019, St. Anthony Spirituality Center, Marathon, WI
- La Verna Regional District Gatherings
  - Southeast region - Portiuncula Fraternity, March 21, 2020
  - Central region - Our Lady Queen of Heaven Fraternity, April 18, 2020, Wisconsin Rapids, WI
  - Fox Valley region - St Joseph Fraternity, Appleton, WI



# Treasurer's Report

submitted by Bob Henning, OFS , Treasurer, La Verna Region

La Verna Regional Fraternity SFO									AMENDED
STATEMENT OF REVENUE & EXPENSE									Approved
FOR PERIODS ENDED DEC 31, 2019 and 2018									6/22/2019
	THIS YEAR	Budget	Budget	Approved					Budget
	Y. T. D.	8 months period	Variance	Last Year					2019
	2019	2019	Favorable	2018					2019
			(Unfavorable)						
BEGINNING BALANCES:									
REGULAR CHECKING -----	6,748.66			(957.20)					
RETREAT SUBSIDY FUND -----	3,888.08			3,201.72					
EDUCATION/TRAINING FUND -----	837.46			1,023.52					
RETREAT/EDUCATION ENDOWMENT FD ---	25,000.00			25,000.00					
CUSTODIAL FUND -----	25,547.00			0.00					
CASH ON HAND -----	0.00			0.00					
FAIR SHARE FUND -----	500.00			0.00					
TOTAL CASH ON HAND & IN BANKS -	62,521.20				28,268.04				
REVENUE:									
DONATIONS -----	2,790.87	1,298.29	1,492.58	32,818.21				1,947.43	
FAIR SHARE FUND -----	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00				0.00	
INT. RETREAT ENDOWMENT FUND	0.00	0.00	0.00	686.36				0.00	
INTEREST EDUCATION FUND	0.00	0.00	0.00	686.37				0.00	
SPECIAL MEMORIALS -----	410.00	0.00	410.00	0.00				0.00	
CHAPTER -----	1,632.00	1,454.00	178.00	2,156.00				2,181.00	
FAIR SHARE - - 371 + 25 @ 80-40	19,212.50	20,633.33	(1,420.83)	24,972.25				30,950.00	
SA WRKSP -----	680.00	1,016.67	(336.67)	1,525.00				1,525.00	
INTEREST CUSTODIAL FUND -----	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00				0.00	
MISC & FORMATION WS INCOME -----	3,158.00	2,533.33	624.67	3,539.78				3,800.00	
TOTAL REVENUE -----	27,883.37	26,935.62	947.75		66,383.97			40,403.43	
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS -----	90,404.57				94,652.01				
			Favorable						
			(Unfavorable)						
EXPENSES:									
STIPENDS & EXPENSES -----	2,050.00	2,000.00	(50.00)	2,600.00				3,000.00	
RENT INCLUDING EQUIPMENT -----	500.00	333.33	(166.67)	481.34				500.00	
MATERIALS & SUPPLIES -----	0.00	33.33	33.33	245.73				50.00	
EDUCATION/TRAINING -----	453.00	2,943.33	2,490.33	4,413.35				4,415.00	
MEETING ROOM & FACILITIES -----	0.00	33.33	33.33	1,035.00				50.00	
OFFICE SUPPLIES -----	444.67	327.33	(117.34)	490.94				491.00	
DONATIONS -----	0.00	2,333.33	2,333.33	0.00				3,500.00	
ADMINISTRATIVE EXP -----	565.39	242.67	(322.72)	78.40				364.00	
NEWSLETTER -----	0.00	200.00	200.00	0.00				300.00	
TRAVEL EXP & EXPENSES -----	6,406.26	3,574.80	(2,831.46)	6,923.06				5,362.20	
FAIR SHARE TO OFS-USA ---396@17---	3,366.00	4,488.00	1,122.00	6,817.00				6,732.00	
ANNUAL CHAPTER -----	5,761.27	4,363.33	(1,397.94)	6,882.20				6,545.00	
VISITATION / ELECTION -----	591.00	1,666.67	1,075.67	100.00				2,500.00	
RETREAT SUBSIDY -----	200.00	116.06	(83.94)	100.00				174.09	
FAIR SHARE FUND	0.00	-	0.00	0.00				0.00	
SA WRKSP -----	1,563.75	1,331.33	(232.42)	1,637.77				1,997.00	
MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSE -----	29.75	266.67	236.92	326.02				400.00	
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS -----	21,931.09	24,253.51	2,322.42		32,130.81			36,380.29	
GAIN OR (LOSS) FOR PERIOD ---	5,952.28	2,682.11	3,270.17		34,253.16			4,023.14	
ENDING BALANCE -----	68,473.48				62,521.20				
CURRENT BALANCES:									
REGULAR CHECKING -----	9,067.94	101 %		6,748.66					
RETREAT SUBSIDY FUND -----	3,788.08			3,888.08					
EDUCATION/TRAINING FUND -----	4,570.46	*****		837.46					
RETREAT / EDUCATION CATHOLIC FUND *-	25,000.00			25,000.00					
CUSTODIAL FUND INVESTMENT (JC) -----	25,547.00			25,547.00					
CASH ON HAND -----	0.00			0.00					
FAIR SHARE FUND -----	500.00			500.00					
TOTAL CASH ON HAND & IN BANKS --	68,473.48			62,521.20					
CUSTODIAL FUND- JC bequest + St Pascal Baylon gift	27,704.23								
as of 06/30/19, last 12 mo = +8.78% Gain / (loss)	2,157.23								
CATHOLIC FOUNDATION FUND VALUE as of 06/30/19	26,807.94	5%	\$ 1,340.40						
* St Francis of Assisi + Anonymous + REC									
Last 12 mo +2.93% Gain / (Loss)	1,807.94								
Bob Hennina, OFS, TREASURER	08/04/19								

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## *A Spiritual Assistant's Reflection*



When asked to comment on his various roles as a spiritual assistant, Fr. Placid Stroik's reflection may not be located in the text of a spiritual assistant's training manual. Fr. Placid feels that *"Spiritual Assistants are key Venture Capitalists. Spiritual Assistants share Franciscan Capital freely. Spiritual Assistants help start-up Franciscans Flourish."*

Although he grew up in the Stevens Point area, Placid actually came up with the idea of venture work with community after working for 25 years at the Covenant House, a homeless center for youth in New York City, run by the Franciscans.

Fr. Placid, who has been a Franciscan friar for over 60 years, said that opening Franciscans Downtown was an "... idea that picked up a little steam, when I was back here visiting family. We found out that this place was available, and here we are."



Franciscans Downtown recently held its open house on June 29th to celebrate their 5th anniversary serving the Stevens Point community. Fr. Placid said that a handful of

volunteers, including area OFS fraternity members, staff Franciscan Downtown. Their mission is a ministry of presence for all. People come into the store and talk over coffee, read books, watch DVD

movies, share stories. "I wanted to have a place where people, no matter who they are or what they believe, can come and relax and talk to each other," Placid said.

Visitors come from high schools, colleges, homes, or homeless shelters. "All are welcomed to share. Every person is a story worthy to be told ... to weave community by sharing stories," Placid said.



St. Peter fraternity member and staff volunteer Bob Crane, OFS, said that a great opportunity for the La Verna Region fraternities will be in the next Franciscans Downtown growth phase. During Placid's

recent visit to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help, he received inspiration by Mother Mary. Fr. Placid received an idea about making the Franciscans Downtown lower level into a reflective place. The room's atmosphere will benefit visitors for reflection, inspiration, and education ... similar to what happens on spiritual pilgrimages in Assisi. Fr. Placid said that prayer is encouraged through a reflective atmosphere.

Bob Crane said that with a few building upgrades, such a blessed addition will help better serve the community and spread the word about what Franciscans can accomplish with faith, joy, and genuine open hospitality.

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### **Editor's note:**

Fr. Placid Stroik, OFM is connected with the Franciscans BVM Assumption Province, and he is the local spiritual assistant with St. Peter fraternity (Stevens Point) and Holy Innocents fraternity (Manitowoc).

Fr. Placid facilitates the Franciscans Downtown community store, which is located at 1000 Main Street, across from the public library, in Stevens Point, WI. Phone: (201) 663-1652. Please check out their events on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/1000MainSt](http://www.facebook.com/1000MainSt) and remember to stop by and visit Franciscans Downtown.

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# Our Formation Vision

by JoAnn Boss, OFS  
La Verna Regional Formation Director

Article 12 of our Rule calls us to be visionaries, seekers, prophets and lovers. We are to be *“Witnessing to the good yet to come and obligated to acquire purity of heart because of the vocation ... [we] have embraced, to set [ourselves] free to love God and ... [our] brothers and sisters.”*

As spiritual seekers we appreciate each other, we share and discuss how we live our Franciscan way of life. Obtaining “purity of heart” means each fraternity member puts their best gifts and talents into fraternity life. Article 12 parallels Mark 22: 36-40: you are to love God and love your neighbor as yourself.

Which brings up an interesting question: How might a formation vision, using article 12 and Mark’s gospel passage, actually work within your local fraternity?

During the 2019 La Verna Chapter, a special breakout session was setup to focus on what type of formation vision is needed and desirable the future of our local fraternities. The formation breakout session attendees included local ministers, delegates, and observers, a total of over 50 OFS and religious from the La Verna Region. At the beginning of the breakout session, three questions were presented on how might their local formation look in the forthcoming years, and how best to pursue that formation vision. Here are the three questions asked at the Chapter breakout session:

- **Are our Formator programs sufficient to meet your fraternity’s future?**
- **How do we utilize the gifts/talents of others in presenting formation lessons?**
- **How will local Formation engage us in our apostolates?**

As a result of the breakout participants brainstorming, three statements emerged that summarized these questions. Our local fraternity’s future has to search for relationships that desires “deep calling on deep” with God and with our OFS brothers and sisters. How may we envision this? Their wisdom revealed:

- **Don’t take a vacation from your vocation.**
- **How is more important than just doing it.**
- **Go deeper within our Franciscan faith – gospel to life and life to gospel.**

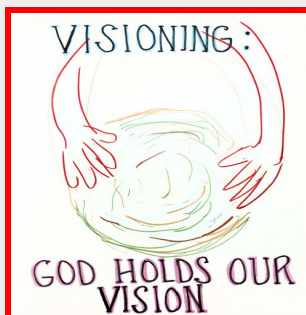
The participants realize that we as an Order are at a pivotal juncture in our fraternal life. The participants foretell the need for radical commitment to our vocation, our ministries, and our conversion both individually and communally. ***They talked about teamwork, spiritual practices & formation that is simplified with clear service focuses.*** Do these building blocks of team work, clear communal purposes and intentions, as well as engaging in gospel value spiritual practices, sound like variations of your profession promises? Check it out – go back and review your three profession promises.

Will you say “**Yes**” again three times?

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## La Verna Region - OFS Vision Statement

**We, the Secular Franciscans of the La Verna Region, commit ourselves to our Order on all its levels by faithfully following our Rule and charism of Sts. Francis and Clare and to see the face of God in all creation through dynamic formation, profound spirituality and joyful vocation.**





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**LaVerna Regional Fraternity OFS**  
APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE  
FOR 2019 FRANCISCAN/CATHOLIC RETREAT FEES

Applicant \_\_\_\_\_ Ph # (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

FRATERNITY: \_\_\_\_\_ PROFESSION DATE: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

RETREAT LOCATION & TOPIC \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

RETREAT DATE \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ FEE \$ \_\_\_\_\_

IN ORDER FOR YOU TO QUALIFY FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE WE NEED TO HAVE SOME INFORMATION.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN FAMILY LIVING AT HOME \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME \$ \_\_\_\_\_

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

THESE GUIDELINES (ALTHOUGH HELD IN STRICT CONFIDENCE) WILL HELP US TO DETERMINE YOUR QUALIFICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:

<u>FAMILY SIZE</u>	<u>MONTHLY INCOME</u>
1	\$ 2,082.00
2	\$ 2,819.00
3	\$ 3,555.00
4	\$ 4,292.00
5	\$ 5,029.00
6	\$ 5,765.00
7	\$ 6,502.00
8	\$ 7,239.00

RETURN TO: BOB HENNING, OFS E-MAIL: [BMJHSFO@AOL.COM](mailto:BMJHSFO@AOL.COM)  
550 LAKEWOOD LANE PHONE: (906) 273-0374  
MARQUETTE, MI 49855

**NOTE: IF FOR SOME REASON YOU CANNOT ATTEND THIS RETREAT, PLEASE RETURN THE ASSISTANCE MONEY TO LA VERNA REGION OFS.**

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## The NATIONAL FRATERNITY of the SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER - USA

Office of the Treasurer BEQUESTS:  
PRESERVING AND EXTENDING OUR SECULAR FRANCISCAN WAY OF LIFE.

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Each of us can play an important role in preserving and extending our Secular Franciscan way of life, in our own fraternity, as well as at the regional, national or international level. This can be accomplished in many ways, including a bequest in our will.

Suggested beneficiaries in our Secular Franciscan sphere:

Your: LOCAL FRATERNITY  
Your: REGIONAL FRATERNITY  
Your: NATIONAL FRATERNITY - NAFRA  
Your: INTERNATIONAL FRATERNITY - CIOFS

Suggested wording for your bequests:

1. A BEQUEST FOR GENERAL PURPOSES:

"I give and bequeath the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_ (or \_\_\_\_\_% of my disposable estate) to: (name and address of fraternity, region, NAFRA or CIOFS).

2. A RESIDUARY BEQUEST OF INDEFINITE AMOUNT:

"After payment of expenses, debts and specific bequests, I direct that the residue of my estate be given to: (name and address).

3. A CONTINGENT SPECIFIC BEQUEST:

"I bequeath to (name and address) any part of my estate that other beneficiaries are unable to receive because of death or other reasons."

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THE ADDRESS OF OFS-USA:  
NATIONAL FRATERNITY OF THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER - USA  
1615 VINE STREET  
CINCINNATI, OH 45210

**QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS, CONTACT:**

OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL TREASURER (see OFS-USA website).  
Claudia Kauzlarich, OFS – [claudiakauz.sfo@gmail.com](mailto:claudiakauz.sfo@gmail.com)

