

# FRANCISCAN MIRROR

WINTER  
2011-2012

Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha Region  
covering most of Upstate New York & Northwestern Pennsylvania



## 'SIGNIFICANT MOMENT'

"This is a very significant moment in the life of the order."

In offering that remark at the Formation Workshop, Spiritual Assistant Richard Trezza, OFM, summed up the critical emphasis that the International and National Fraternities are placing on initial formation of prospective members of the Secular Franciscan Order. *PAGE 6.*



## FRIAR GETS AWARD

U.S. Order gives *Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Award* to Fr. Louie. *PAGE 8.*



## PROTECT RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Archbishop Dolan, head of U.S. bishops, acts to fight threats to religious liberty. *PAGE 8.*



## DON'T SIT ON FENCE

At Chapter, General Minister urges Secular Franciscans to take action. *PAGE 9.*



## FRIARS JOIN WORKSHOP

National and local friar spiritual assistants gather for spiritual assistant workshop in Skaneateles. *PAGE 5.*

## BLESSED KATERI TEKAKWITHA REGION EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

*Minister*

**Mary Frances Charsky, SFO**  
(607) 724-4528  
charsky@bktr.org

*Formation Director*

**Mary Stronach, SFO**  
(315) 796-9284  
stronach@bktr.org

*Vice Minister*

**Kimberly A. Marks, SFO**  
(716) 668-3830  
marks@bktr.org

*Councilor-Eastern Area*

**Catherine E. Koscinski, SFO**  
(315) 797-1985  
koscinski@bktr.org

*Secretary*

**Joanne Lockwood, SFO**  
(315) 896-4449  
lockwood@bktr.org

*Councilor-Central Area*

**Cathy Feheley, SFO**  
(607) 723-8170  
feheley@bktr.org

*Treasurer*

**John Sanborn, SFO**  
(716) 773-1912  
sanborn@bktr.org

*Councilor-Western Area*

**Marie Meyer, SFO**  
(716) 835-5480  
meyer@bktr.org

*Spiritual Assistant*

**Richard Trezza, OFM**  
(973) 778-1915, ext.124  
rivortorto@bktr.org

*Council Advisor*

**Ed Czapla, SFO**  
(716) 683-6508

*JPIC\* Chair*

**Robert Stronach, SFO**  
(315) 796-9468  
stronach@bktr.org

*JPIC\* Coordinator &  
Youth/Young Adult Chair*  
**Riobart (Rob) Breen, SFO**  
rbreen@bktr.org

*\*Justice, Peace & Integrity  
of Creation Commission.*

## FRANCISCAN MIRROR

WINTER 2011-2012

### EDITORS

BOB STRONACH, SFO  
MARY STRONACH, SFO  
(315) 796-9284  
(800) 986-0423 (FAX)

PLEASE SEND NEWS  
& NEWSLETTERS TO:  
MARY & BOB STRONACH  
PO BOX 232  
MARCY, NY 13403.  
STRONACH@BKTR.ORG

DEADLINES: FEB. 15,  
MAY 15, AUG. 15, NOV. 15.



## Regional Minister's Message

By MARY FRANCES CHARSKY, SFO

## CHAPTER IS OPPORTUNITY FOR PRAYER AND FELLOWSHIP

*Greetings to all Secular Franciscans and  
Spiritual Assistants,*

May the Lord give you peace!

We are planning an exciting Regional Chapter of Visitation 2012, scheduled for April 27 - 29, 2012, at Stella Maris Retreat Center. This will be a joyful occasion to gather with our Franciscan brothers and sisters. Fraternity Ministers are expected to participate. We encourage all Secular Franciscans in the region to consider joining us for the weekend. It will be an opportunity for prayer, formation, fellowship and refreshment. Let's have two or more members from each fraternity participating and welcoming our national visitors.

Fr. Lester Bach, OFM Cap., and National Minister Tom Bello, SFO, are happy to be joining us for the Visitation. We hope to renew our spiritual health by providing formation, inspiration and relaxation with the Lord and each other. What a perfect way to engage in our Franciscan way of life!

Let us praise and glorify God forever.

## BUFFALO FRATERNITY PROFESSES 2

St. Patrick Fraternity in Buffalo announced the profession of two members, Frank Cifelli, SFO, and Joe Burger, SFO.

The profession took place Sept. 18, 2011 at St. Patrick's Friary.

Participating in the profession ceremony was Brother Maurice Swartout, OFM, better known as Brother Moe.



**Newly professed Frank Cifelli, SFO, and Joe Burger, SFO, with Brother Moe.**

**Vernon's newly professed: Audrey Moran, SFO, Alice Amodeo, SFO, Patricia Pekola SFO**

## 2012 DATES TO CIRCLE

**March 10:** *Central NY Franciscan Experience*, Syracuse, at the Sisters of St. Francis facilities on Court Street.

Presenter is Sr. Anne Amati, OSF, retreat



director at the Franciscan Spirituality Center in Aston, PA.

...

**April 27-29:** *Annual Regional Chapter* at Stella Maris Retreat Center, Skaneateles, NY.

...

**May 27-June 5:** *BKT Regional Pilgrimage to Assisi and Rome*, with Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM, as chaplain.

...

**June 10:** *SFO Day* at Shrine of Our Lady of Martyrs, Auriesville, NY, sponsored by St. Bernardine of Siena Fraternity.

...

**July 3-7:** 18th Quinquennial Congress in Chicago. Theme: "Why Francis? Claim the Gift!"

## 3 PROFESSED AT VERNON FRATERNITY

Holy Family Fraternity in Vernon has professed three new members, reports Minister Mary Walker, SFO.

They are Patricia Pekola, SFO, Alice Amodeo, SFO, and Audrey Moran, SFO. The profession took place during Mass on Saturday, Nov. 5, at Holy Family Church, Vernon.

**Wall of Honor**  
In Memory Of  
**Sr. Rose Vincent Gleason, OSF**  
remembered by  
*Bob and Mary Stronach, SFO*

**Tim Fitzgerald, Esq.**  
remembered by  
*Bob and Mary Stronach, SFO*

In Honor Of  
**Fr. Stephen Gross, OFM Conv**  
on his Jubilee  
*by Jeannette B. Williams, SFO*

*How to participate in the Wall of Honor – Page 11.*

## URGENT PROFESSION AT LOCKPORT

St. Anthony Fraternity in Lockport held an "emergency" profession for Kathy Burt on Sunday, Nov. 13, after it was learned she was "afflicted with thyroid cancer with surgery scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 15," Minister Al Picogna reported. Her profession had been scheduled for



**Newly professed Kathy Burt, SFO, is flanked by St. Anthony Minister Al Picogna, SFO, and Formation Director Rob Goodlander, SFO.**

later in the month.

The profession took place at St. Brendan-on-the-Lake in Newfane, NY, and "was very beautiful and powerful,"

he said.

Al provided an update: "Kathy was operated on Tuesday and a miracle was witnessed. While searching all over for

possible thyroid cancer, the surgeons found -- nothing! Praise the Lord! Prayers are very powerful. "Amen to that!"

## NATIONAL LEADERS TO ATTEND CHAPTER

National Minister Tom Bello, SFO, and National Spiritual Assistant Lester Bach, OFM Cap., will be official visitors for the Regional Chapter set for April 27-29 at Stella Maris Retreat Center in Skaneateles, NY, Regional Minister Mary Frances Charsky, SFO, announced.

Every fraternity is required to send a delegate (either the minister or his/her representative) to conduct the

business of the order and receive information to take back to the local fraternity, she noted.

"The chapter will be a Franciscan family gathering," she said. "We look forward to being inspired by on-going formation sessions, by our sharing as brothers and sisters, and by the open dialogue with our national visitors."

Tom is an ordained deacon, and Father Lester is author of spiritual and formation books.

Because of the richness of coming together in chapter, she noted, fraternities are invited to send as many representatives and spouses as they like (delegate, observers and guests).

To register, contact Vice Minister Kim Marks, SFO, with the following information:

1. Status (minister or delegate, spiritual assistant, or observer/guest).
2. Name, address, phone, email address.
3. Local fraternity.

4. If need handicapped accommodations, or have special dietary needs.

5. Anticipated date and time of arrival.

Registration fee is \$205, covering meals, room and handouts.

Send registration info, with payment made out to *Secular Franciscan Order BKTR Fraternity*, no later than March 24, to: Kim Marks, SFO, 11 East Rouen Drive, Cheektowaga, NY 14227.

(Or get **registration form** at [www.bktr.org](http://www.bktr.org).)



## FRIARS GIVE WORKSHOP FOR SPIRITUAL ASSISTANTS

by Karen Szczesniak, SFO

The Conference of National Spiritual Assistants (CNSA) conducted a workshop for spiritual assistants in the Bl. Kateri Tekakwitha Region on Sept. 14 at Stella Maris Retreat Center in Skaneateles, NY.

Presenters included:

- Fr. **Stephen Gross**, OFM Conv., who discussed *Altius Moderamen*, a Latin term used in Canon 303 to mean that the friars of the First Order and Third Order Regular are to



**FROM LEFT: Bob Brady, OFM, Stephen Gross, OFM Conv., Kevin Queally, TOR, and Lester Bach, OFM Cap.**

guarantee the fidelity of the SFO to the Franciscan charism, communion with the Church and union with the Franciscan Family. (General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order, Article #85.2).

- Fr. **Kevin Queally**, TOR, who spoke about the role of spiritual

assistants at various levels.

- Br. **Bob Brady**, OFM, who discussed the role of spiritual assistants in the development of new fraternities.

- Fr. **Lester Bach**, OFM Cap., who reviewed the process of appointing a spiritual assistant to a fraternity.

He stressed that there is a "proper process" and local spiritual assistants and ministers must understand the process.

Regional Minister Mary Frances Charsky, SFO, and Regional Spiritual Assistant Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM, worked with the CNSA to make this workshop available.



**Among the spiritual assistants attending the workshop were, from left: Karen Szczesniak, SFO; Bill Geary, SFO; Anne Thomas, SFO; Linda Robinson, SFO; Mary Helen Buscarino, OSF, and Mary Smith, SFO.**

## FORMATION WORKSHOP

# 'SIGNIFICANT MOMENT IN LIFE OF ORDER'

"This is a very significant moment in the life of the order."

In offering that remark during the opening prayer session at the Alma Kraus Memorial Regional Formation Workshop, Spiritual Assistant Richard Trezza, OFM, summed up the critical emphasis that the International and National Fraternities are placing on initial formation of prospective members of the Secular Franciscan Order.

Held at Christ the King Retreat Center in Syracuse Oct. 14-16, the workshop introduced the new national manual for formators -- formation directors and teams -- to use as a guide in



**Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM**

providing initial formation for inquirers and candidates.

Some 50 people participated in the workshop, representing all fraternities but one, Regional Minister Mary Frances Charsky noted.

She referred to it as the "FUN" manual, an acronym for part of the title, "For Up to Now: Foundational Topics for

Initial Formation." The words, For Up to Now, come from a charge by Francis of Assisi: "Let us begin, for up to now we have done nothing."

The new manual doesn't mean formation teams need to replace the formation books they are using, she said. It does mean they need to make sure that key subject areas outlined

in the new manual are covered.

Thus the purpose of the new manual is to ensure proper in-depth formation for all prospective members of the Order, regional leaders explained.

The leaders introduced some of the key topics, and offered suggestions on how to teach the material and



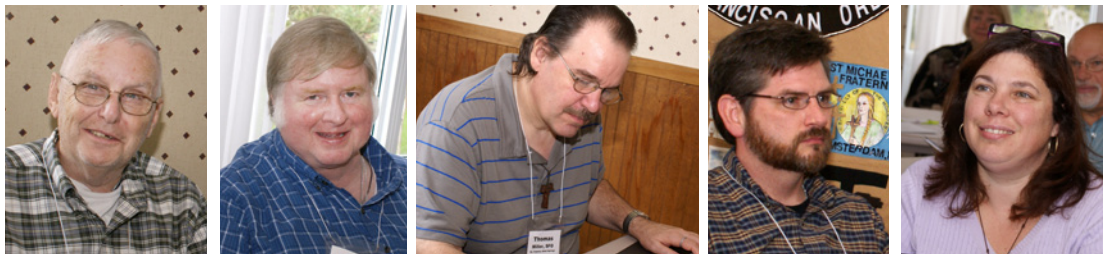
**Mary Frances Charsky, SFO**



**Workshop banner refers to "FUN" acronym for the formators' manual.**



**Among the attendees: Marie Bitter, Mary Smith, Carol Miller, Margaret Musial, Angela Nelligan, and Lena Silba. BELOW: Bill Geary, David Green, Thomas Miller, Rob Breen, Layna Maher.**



how to take advantage of resources on an accompanying CD.

One highlight was the significance of Secular Franciscan profession -- which, while different, is of the same import as religious profession, Father Richard noted. It's a public, church-

witnessed consecration of one's life to God -- to live the gospel of Jesus Christ in the footsteps of St. Francis.

Presenters included:

- Mary Frances Charsky, who gave an overview of the formation manual project.
- Cathy Feheley, councilor, who dis-

cussed discernment of a Franciscan vocation.

- Kim Marks, vice minister, who spoke on what formation is and pathways to profession.
- Catherine Koscinski, councilor, who gave an overview of basic Catholic doctrine.
- Fr. Richard Trezza, who discussed ecclesi-

ology and formation.

Marie Meyer, councilor, who discussed vocation, mission and charism.

- Joanne Lockwood, secretary, who spoke on St. Clare.
- Mary Stronach, formation director, who briefed the assembly on Franciscan theology.



**Helen Carpenter, Layna Maher, Mary Walker, Peter Wooschlager, Al Picgnoa, Karen Szczesniak, Bill Heinz, and Carol Samuelson.**



# U.S. BISHOPS FIGHT THREATS TO RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

U.S. bishops formed an Ad Hoc Committee in September to address the erosion of freedom of religion in America.

Archbishop Timothy Dolan, president of U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), said religious freedom “is now increasingly and in unprecedented ways under assault in America.”

“This is most particularly so in an increasing number of federal government programs or policies... If we do not act now, the consequence will be grave.”



**Archbishop Dolan**

He listed concerns arising just since June:

- Federal Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) regulations that would mandate the coverage of contraception (including

abortifacients) and sterilization in all private health insurance plans, which could coerce church employers.

- An HHS requirement that USCCB’s Migration and Refugee Services provide the “full range of reproductive services” -- meaning abortion and contraception.

- Catholic Relief Services’ concern that US Agency for International Development, under the Department of State, is increasingly requiring condom distribution.

- Justice Department’s

attack on the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), presenting DOMA’s support for traditional marriage as bigotry.

- Justice Department’s recent attack on the critically important “ministerial exception,” that leaves to churches (not government) the power to make employment decisions concerning persons working in a ministerial capacity.

- New York State’s new law redefining marriage, with only a very narrow religious exemption.

## FRIAR RECEIVES NATIONAL PEACE AWARD

Fr. Louie Vitale, PhD, OFM, a friar known for protests against war and torture and advocacy for the poor, is the recipient of the U.S. Secular Franciscan Order’s *Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Award*.

The award was presented at the national chapter in October in

San Juan Bautista, CA. Formerly known as the Peace Award, it was “renamed this year to capture the significant efforts in the areas of justice, peace and the integrity of creation,” noted Award Chairman Kent Ferris, SFO.

Fr. Louie, 79, of Oakland, CA, co-founded

Nevadea Desert Experience, a movement to end nuclear testing, and Pace e Bene, which aims to transform lives through education and nonviolent action for social change.

When he was pastor of St. Boniface Church in San Francisco, he opened its doors to the homeless so they could sleep in the

pews during the day.

Father Louie has engaged in civil disobedience for four decades. He has been arrested an estimated 300 times protesting war, nuclear weapons, drones, and the training of Latin American soldiers at what was called the U.S. Army’s School of the Americas.



# DON'T SIT ON FENCE, GENERAL MINISTER EXHORTS

The general minister, from the General Chapter in Brazil at the end of October, urged Secular Franciscans worldwide to support emerging fraternities, to get involved with Franciscan youth, to take on the church's urgent call to evangelize, and to stop sitting on the fence in creating a more just and fraternal world.

"The order is growing!" said Encarnación (Encarnita) del Pozo, OFS. "It is growing not only in numbers but also in awareness of its identity, of its proper place in the Family and the Church as well as in awareness of the work it must undertake in the world in continuing the mission of Francis."

She pointed to an increasing number of emerging fraternities in all parts of the world, "especially in those areas where the Church exists in very difficult

conditions." She encouraged Secular Franciscans "to get involved in accompanying these fraternities both spiritually as well as materially and to assist them in formation."

Noting that "Franciscan Youth is growing stronger all over the world and is a witness to us of a profound commitment of Christian and human authenticity," the general minister said: "We exhort you to love, get to know, and support YOUFRA."



**General Minister Encarnita del Pozo, OFS**

Encarnita noted that the Holy Father, in his message to the chapter, asked Secular Franciscans "to be builders of a civilization of love" and "witnesses and instruments of the redemptive mission of the Church, announcing Christ both by word and their own example."

She said: "It is a mission which is urgent and demanding."

The chapter also challenged attendees to reflect on the call to build a more just and

fraternal world -- "to become active witnesses and not just passive and distracted observers of the injustices and extreme material and spiritual poverty that a world without God imposes on a large part of humanity and creation."

She exhorted: "We can no longer sit on the fence. The Church and the world is waiting for a courageous and effective response from us. The Church and the world has a need for Francis and for the Family of which we are the part that is the largest in number and the most deeply implicated in every place of the world."

She closed her message by entrusting the order to the protection of Mary, mother of God, "that she might watch over us and lead us to the full realization of our vocation and mission."

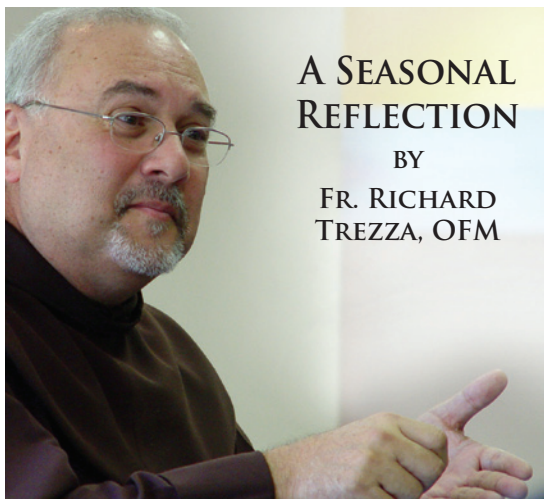
# TAKING STOCK OF OUR SPIRITUAL LIVES

Peace and good to all of you!

Well, Summer is a distant memory. The appearances of sweaters eased us into the inevitable Winter weather.

We here in the Northeast are content to take part in the progressive seasonal changes. We anticipate them and welcome the memories they bring of family customs, holidays, special foods, etc. Even our liturgy took on some changes as we readied ourselves for some of the changes in translation that will make our experience of Mass even more meaningful. Even the readings began to get us to think about the end times.

As we said good-bye to green leaves then leaves altogether and also to the familiar formulae of our liturgical prayers, we began to think of our own passing. Before we knew it,



## A SEASONAL REFLECTION

BY

FR. RICHARD  
TREZZA, OFM

we celebrated All Souls Day and asked ourselves how it is we are making our journey to the eternal kingdom.

As Franciscans, this is not a seasonal question. As Penitents, Secular Franciscans ask that question often - or should. Our Profession (consecration and oblation ... gift of self to the Lord) has set the pace for letting go. Consecration -- the setting aside of something or someone for God's exclusive use -- is an ongoing transformation from seeing this world

as the place which gives us all we need to be happy, to seeing the doing of God's will and eternal life as the be all and end of all we do and are.

By the time you read this, NAFRA, the National Fraternity, will have met in California. The Chapter will have begun with a Mass of Remembrance. This is perhaps a strange way to call brothers and sisters together for a fraternal week, but it makes absolute sense when you think about it.

Calling to mind our deceased sisters and brothers is more than just giving thanks for what they accomplished for the Order and who they were for us. It is the moment of looking at our destiny squarely in the face and setting goals that set us in the direction of the Kingdom to come and also to re-order Franciscan lives that will benefit the Kingdom among us.

Let us use this season to take stock spiritually of our lives. Where are we going? How are we announcing the Good News of the Kingdom and how, as Franciscan women and men, are we bringing others along in that radical, joyful and hope-filled manner of St. Francis?

May he continue to intercede for us in answering our prayers to be faithful to our Professions and to be good signs of the presence of Christ in our world.

## LEGION, AIR PATROL HONOR EDITOR

By Karen Szczesniak, SFO

The Civil Air Patrol (CAP) and The American Legion this year honored Bob Stronach, SFO, of St. Joseph Fraternity, Utica.

CAP recognized Bob as:

- 2010 New York Wing Public Affairs Officer of the Year,
- 2010 Northeast Region Public Affairs Officer of the Year,
- nominee for 2011 National Public Affairs Officer of the Year.

With the Legion, he re-

ceived First Place Awards as a newsletter editor from both the New York and National American Legion Press Associations, along with the Department of New York Public Relations Award.

Bob is vice minister of his fraternity, Justice-Peace-and-Integrity-of-Creation chair for the region, co-editor of *Franciscan Mirror*, and public relations co-chair for the National Fraternity. His wife, Mary, is the other co-editor and co-chair as well as regional formation director.

## SPONSOR THE MIRROR

We need sponsors to help defray printing cost so that the Regional Fraternity can continue to improve your *Franciscan Mirror*.

- 6"x1" ads
- \$100: inside page.
- \$150: inside cover.
- \$200: back cover.

Mail your message/ad, with check made out to BKTR, c/o Franciscan Mirror, PO Box 232, Marcy, NY; or contact Mary Stronach at 315-796-9284, or [stonach@bktr.org](mailto:stonach@bktr.org).

## YOU CAN REMEMBER OR HONOR SOMEONE IN THE WALL OF HONOR

A Wall of Honor page offers a way to remember, honor or thank Franciscans, family members, friends, business associates. Fill out and mail form along with a \$10 donation. Funds will be used to help pay for publications aimed at benefiting the region's fraternities (such as The Mirror and formation materials).

### WALL OF HONOR FORM

Name of Person Submitting Form \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person/Group Doing the Honoring (if different from above) \_\_\_\_\_

Contact info: Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Name of honoree \_\_\_\_\_

Select one: \_\_\_ in memory of \_\_\_ in honor of

List reason/occasion \_\_\_\_\_  
(e.g., profession anniversary, gratitude for service, etc.)

Donation: \$10 per name.

Please make checks payable to Bl. Kateri Tekakwitha Region (BKTR).

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## QUINQUENNIAL CONGRESS HITS CHICAGO IN JULY

The 18th Quinquennial Congress takes place July 3-7, 2012 in Chicago, Illinois. The theme is: *"Why Francis? Claim the Gift!"*

"We are encouraging every fraternity that is able, and every region, to send at least one representative," notes Clare McCluggage, SFO, who is co-chairing the Q with former National Minister

Patrick Mendes, SFO. She said attendees will not only be edified, but also find a time of discerning -- like a

Chapter of Mats.

Programming will be centered around a series of questions to help Secular Francis-

cans revisit the vision and to claim the gift that Francis left us.

Keynote speaker is Sr. Ilia Delio, OSF.

Other featured speakers:

- Br. William Short, OFM.
- Pat Brandwein-Ball, SFO.
- Ed Shirley, SFO.

The **Q's registration form** is available on the regional website, [www.bktr.org](http://www.bktr.org).

