

# TRACINGS

ORDO FRANCISCANUS SAECULARIS | www.queenofpeaceregion.org



Secular Franciscan Order

Fall 2016, Issue 18

## Minister's Message – Into the deep end

By Kim Pappas, OFS, Regional Minister

The homily I heard today said we should "put out into the deep end." Each of us has a "deep end" that we are called to according to God's plan.

As we go about our Franciscan "business," we are not always attentive to the fact that we Seculars make up 65% of the Franciscan family. Our "deep end" has changed from Father-led, Father "do it" dependency to being the primary flag-bearer for the Franciscans.

We need to be visible at our parishes, our communities and in non-traditional forms of communications. This includes the internet, social media as well as traditional media.

The "deep end" that we are now called to is research and figuring out how this deep end can be utilized by our fraterni-

ties. We may not know much about them, but a visit to the local library and a friendly librarian can help us. How many times did Christ tell us "Be Not Afraid."

Every generation must face its fears - to put out into the deep end. A swimmer knows that the shallow end is generally safe. The deep end brings peril as well as great rewards-remember a large catch of fish resulted in Peter putting out into the deep end.

I do not believe that we have the luxury of swimming in the shallow end. Let's make a commitment to do one thing that would move us to the "deep end." We do not need to be Olympic swimmers to venture into the deep end. We just need to be the OFS that we professed to be.

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## Saint Clare and Justice

By Cynthia Gunsolly, OFS, JPIC Co-Animator

We readily see how the Integrity of Creation and Peace are attributable to our dear Seraphic Father, Francis. I would like to share with you a little about Clare which you may not be aware of - I certainly was not aware before attending a class on St. Clare and Franciscan Woman offered this past July at St. Bonaventure University in Alleghany, NY. I learned that our dear sister, Clare was definitely a good representation of Justice (*per Merriam-Webster online "Justice"- (1) the principle or ideal of just dealing or right action (2): conformity to this principle or ideal: righteousness.*).

Clare was born around the year 1194 into a Medieval Patriarchal world, a



Queen of Peace Region at the "Q"

## Saint Clare - Continued

world controlled by men- both within their families of origin (fathers and husbands) and the Church's Hierarchy. In this worldly setting, Clare truly held her own, even convincing Pope Innocent IV to approve her Privilege of Poverty (her "forma vitae"- form of life) for herself and her sisters at San Damiano- two days before her death. It seemed as though she stayed death until the way of life which her mentor, Francis, had established was secure. This was quite the feat considering the Papacy's desire and active plan of channeling the blossoming "women's religious movement" of the late 12<sup>th</sup> and early 13<sup>th</sup> Centuries into a more monastic cloistered way of life. It may help to illustrate some of what Clare was up against. During the Middle Ages, women were not itinerant - if they traveled it was with their fathers or their husband. Woman had to be protected and controlled. Men were convinced that these delicate creatures were weak and not able to control themselves- an unmarried woman wouldn't stop a man from making advances or from what would follow. During the Middle Ages this mindset was the norm. So, the structure of life established at San Damiano (*living as sisters and brothers*) was definitely not the norm of medieval society. Within the Patriarchal Medieval mindset it was incomprehensible that men and woman could live as sisters and brothers. Even the Church's Hierarchy had this medieval mindset. Now you can appreciate what Clare was up against, protecting the "Franciscan" way of life from the enclosure that the Papacy wanted to impose upon them (*by 1228 there were twenty Hugolinian/Church Hierarchy monasteries established in central and northern Italy - all strictly enclosed*).

Continued on page 3

## I AM A RACIST . . .

*by Kathy Taormina, OFS, Regional Spiritual Assistant*

I am a racist.

I made that public declaration at the recent Quinquennial for the Secular Franciscan Order. The public declaration came after the realization of that fact from embracing the message of Fr. Dan Horan, OFM during his presentation of "Racism and Xenophobia."

I always thought of myself as a 'good' person. I tried to live a life following the Gospels and embracing my vocation as a Franciscan. The big problem with that is that I forgot how to live a life following the greatest Gospel commandment of: "love your neighbor as yourself."

I realized that although I tried to "trust in the presence of the divine seed in everyone," I was falling way short of that very act of love. Fr. Dan explained the reality of "white privilege" as I realized I have been living it all of my life.

I use the words "those" and "us" and "them" and use many other adjectives that perpetuate my racism, most of the time without a thought to what comes out of my mouth. When I would point out a white person I would describe them by their clothing or hair color, but when I would point out others I would most times begin with their nationality! What the heck? How had I become such a 'labeler', a nicer word than 'racist'? When in my mind did 'all of humanity' become specific groups of people according to their skin color, religion, country of origin, sexual orientation or weight? When had I become a racist?

Had I become a racist because of my upbringing or my environment? How

was it so easy to see racism in others but not in myself? When I was a small child in the early sixties I remember my Dad yanking me away from a fountain in the South because I was going to drink out of the "colored" fountain instead of the "white only" fountain. In the mid-eighties when the military moved us to LA (aka; Lower Alabama) and our landlords told us that our friends were not welcome in the pool "because they would ruin the water," where had that feeling of being appalled gone? Over the years, and living back in the North, had I relaxed backed into the white privileged lifestyle without a thought?

I am a racist. God help me!

It is said that you cannot have on-going conversion if you have never had a conversion experience. I pray that this realization IS my conversion experience. This is now my prayer, for the grace to open my eyes and change. To truly hear the Word of GOD and see the examples of Francis and Clare and be moved to leave my old self behind and become a new creation. Grace enough to leave behind the labels and the privileges of my life and to be a new person in Christ. Not to be goaded into something because of statistics thrown in my face, or because of fear for my soul, but because of a call to believe in that divine seed in others and the eternal call from Christ to LOVE.

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another!"

By the grace and mercy of God, I used to be a racist.

July 6, 2016

## The Stigmata of Francis

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of September We celebrate the stigmata of St. Francis of Assisi. Few saints have had a decisive influence on the civil and ecclesiastical history of all time as the Poverello of Assisi. And few have taken the evangelical maxims as far as this man who identified himself so much with Jesus Christ crucified, that he deserved to receive in his body the sacred stigmata.

According to his biographers, two years before his death, St. Francis of Assisi retired in Tuscany with five of his closest brothers, on the Mount La Verna, to celebrate the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin and prepare the feast of St. Michael the Archangel by forty days of fasting. It was around the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Kneeling before his cell, Francis was praying with outstretched arms awaiting dawn and was subject to an outstanding grace. The Lord crucified appeared to him in a figure of a six-winged seraph. After

spending time with him in conversation, he departed leaving in the body of Francis the sacred stigmata printed.

Thus, this disciple and a passionate lover of Christ, who longed to resemble him, received this similar trait with Jesus Christ.

It was at the close of his life, when he was at the end of his strength, stigmatized, suffering without relief both physically and morally, that he reached the summit of perfect joy and composed the Canticle of the Creatures. He needed to attain the very heart of the Paschal Mystery of death and Resurrection before he could express this hymn in which the whole of creation is reconciled with God and in Him recovers its pristine integrity.

Our current preoccupations with freedom, with peace, with life, with happiness, with respect for God's creation, all these aspirations are suggested to us by Francis of Assisi.

*Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, 5 Sep 2016-  
http://www.fmm.org/pls/fmm/v3\_s2ew\_consultazione.mostra\_pagina?id\_pagina=1042*

## Saint Clare – Continued

For people living in the Middle Ages, this model of life was new - San Damiano was a sedentary community of women, the men travel and begged, but would come back to San Damiano to stay if sick, to be cared for by the sisters, or if in the area of Assisi and not living/lodging at the Portiuncula. San Damiano always had a small group of Friars staying with them, caring for the sisters - shopping, begging, celebrating Mass and providing the Sacraments.

It was definitely right action- Justice - for Clare to contend with the Church Hierarchy of her time in order to preserve the form of life which she and Francis had established for themselves and for their brothers and sisters. I feel blessed with such a large Franciscan family - feeling like you've known someone all your life when meeting them for the first time (*this feeling of familiarity never ceases to amaze me, when meeting brothers and sisters at National functions such as the Q or JPIC Retreats.*) I have placed a write up on Clare and her achieve - meets/struggles especially after the death of Francis on our QOP Website. I encourage you to check the website out.

### Secular Franciscan Order Queen of Peace Region Charitable Giving Form

I/We would like to make a tax deductible donation to the OFS Queen of Peace Regional Common Fund:

In honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

- or -

As a Memorial to: \_\_\_\_\_

My/Our check numbered \_\_\_\_\_ in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_ is included in this mailing, made out to "QUEEN OF PEACE REGION."

My/Our Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail this form and your check to:  
Treasurer, OFS Queen of Peace Region  
22983 W. Martin Lake Drive, Stacy, MN 55079





## UPCOMING EVENTS

### All Iowa Retreat

Holy Trinity Fraternity, Dubuque and The Companions of St Francis NFG will be hosting the 2016 All Iowa Retreat on 18 September, 2016 at the Basilica of St John the Evangelist, 1915 University Ave., Des Moines, IA. Mass and profession of Rosemary Sloss, OFS – 10:30 AM Speaker Sr Nancy Miller, OSF Contact Ann Weltin, OFS 563 590 6302.

### Queen of Peace Regional Fall Gathering 2016

The 2016 Regional Fall Gathering, sponsored by St Leonard of Port Maurice Fraternity, will be held Saturday, October 8th, 2016 from 8:30 AM to 3:45 PM at St. Austin's Church in North Minneapolis, 4050 Upton Ave N. Sr. Elise Saggau, OSF, will be speaking on Franciscan Spirituality Today: What Difference Does It Make?

### Queen of Peace Regional Spring Gathering 2017

The Regional Spring Gathering sponsored by Spiritus Sanctus Emerging Fraternity, will be held at the Franciscan Mother House in Little Falls, MN, Saturday, April 22, 2017. Registration is from 8:30 to 9 AM. Program begins at 9 AM. Guest speaker is Fr. Daniel P. Horan, OFM Conv., who will be speaking on the Franciscan Spirit of Thomas Merton. Registration information will be available later.

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