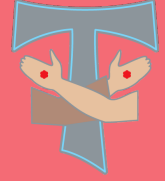


The Padre Pio Fraternity Raleigh Area Newsletter



THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS REGION
ANNUAL REGIONAL GATHERING
AUGUST 9-11, 2019 "VIBRANT FRATERNAL LIFE"
LIFEWAY CONFERENCE CENTER – RIDGECREST, NC



The Newly Elected Regional Executive Council 2019

Regional Minister

- Dorothy Ann
Rowland, OFS

Regional Vice-Minister

- Carmen Madero, OFS

Regional Secretary

- Nora Wessling, OFS

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Regional Treasurer

- Ken Brooke, OFS

Regional Formation

Director

- Diane Ambrose, OFS

-

Councilors

Area 1:

-David Cruz-Uribe,

OFS

- Sharon Loiselle,

OFS

Area 2:

- Christine Lukesh,

OFS

- Betti Longinotti OFS

Area 3:

- Ellen Ferrone, OFS

- Martha Roman,

OFS

Padre Pio Attendees

Fr. Steven
Kluge, OFM,
Spiritual Asst.

Victoria
Romero, OFS
Minister

Lee Cunningham,
OFS Vice-Minister

Michael Hancock,
OFS Secretary

S. Lynn Oeser,
OFS Form. Dir.

Michael Oeser,
OFS

Ellen Ferrone,
OFS Councilor

Maureen Copan,
OFS Councilor

Jeanette Cottone,
OFS

Joan Monti, OFS

David Shick, OFS

Lourdes Shick

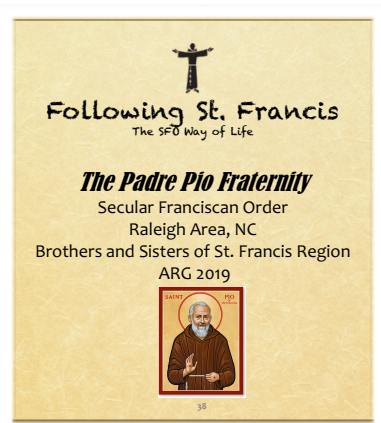




M. Oeser, OFS, S. Kluge, OFM, L. Cunningham, OFS, L. Oeser, OFS, J. Monti, OFS, D. Shick, OFS, L. Shick, M. Copan, OFS, V. Romero, OFS, J. Cottone, OFS, E. Ferrone, OFS, M. Hancock, OFS behind M. Copan, OFS.

Padre Pio Fraternity Presentation

S. Lynn Oeser, OfS, our Formation Director presented a slide show on *Following St Francis* which was an overview of the OFS Rule. Maureen Copan OFS stated, “The slide show was very well received. People asked how they could get a copy. Diane Ambrose has it and they can request it from her.” It was shown again on Sunday morning.



Fr. Steve Kluge's Impression of the ARG

As a Franciscan priest, I am used to attending our own gatherings, called Chapters. Usually, I find these a bit tedious as we discuss and vote on the business at hand, and I leave feeling a bit overwhelmed. On reflection of my first ARG, I discovered that I was strengthened in my own Franciscan vocation through seeing so many Secular Franciscans living their desire to follow Christ. I was strengthened by praying the Liturgy of the Hours together, listening to the speakers, and participating in the Eucharist. All who were there ministered to me in some way. Thank you all and I look forward to attending next year.

Presentation on Catholic Social Teaching

I would like to share some of the highlights from the presentation on Catholic Social Teaching given by Carolyn Townes OFS at the ARG recently. She began by stating that, "We are to be Christ to everyone we meet." Yes, that means even those who may drive us crazy and whom we would prefer to ignore. "If we're wearing the TAU, we must live what it stands for."

Anyone who has ever heard Carolyn speak knows that she is able to really motivate her audience. She gave us the example of the zeal St. Paul had in persecuting members of the early Church. When he met Christ, his "zeal flipped." For those of us who have encountered Christ, maybe not in the manner of St. Paul, do we share his zeal for doing Christ's work? She repeated several times over, "The spirit who raised Christ from the dead is living within you." What a powerful statement, and where will it lead each of us?

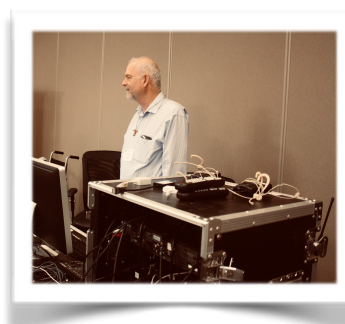
She provided some insights into suffering that I would like to share. She said, "If you're going through hell keep going and come out on fire." "Let your pain be your purpose." "Let the mess be your message." "What is the thorn and what am I to do with it?"

She went on to discuss Catholic Social Teaching which in the simplest terms is "an invitation to a relationship with God and with all of God's creation—God's people and God's world." "It's a continuation of God's love story for his people." God has always desired a relationship with his people; but he wants us to return the favor. The social doctrine of the Catholic Church teaches us how to be in communion with one another, especially those who are more vulnerable and on the margins of society. She encouraged us to, "Engage with it, participate with it."

One way to engage and participate is by taking the Clare Pledge. Carolyn will send an email regarding the Clare Pledge soon. She briefly talked about what is involved. If one decides to take the pledge you are committing to contacting your elected representatives in Congress to intercede on behalf of our brothers and sisters who are in need of our help. Find a topic or issue that is important to you. Where do you see injustice? Constituent calls are the most effective way of influencing our policy makers.

Calls can be made from the comfort of your own home. Therefore, our homebound brothers and sisters can participate in this effort as well. Stay tuned for more information coming soon.

Finally, someone recently asked Carolyn if there is a book that has been published that relates the principals of Catholic Social Teaching to our SFO Rule. Someone else responded no, because Carolyn hasn't written it yet. Guess what? She has started the book and needs our prayers to get her to the finish line. *By Maureen Copan, OFS*



We wish to thank Michael Hancock, OFS of our fraternity for serving as the engineering technician again at this year's ARG. Here is a one link from Michael Hancock for the videos on presentations. Click here:

[Padre Pio Fraternity Pictures 2019 ARG](#)



It's always a pleasure to browse and buy the excellent reading material and religious

(Franciscan) objects presented by St. Francis Springs.



In our Display we honored those who serve tirelessly, those who are being served and the generosity of our Fraternity. This display helped tell the story of who we are as a Fraternity and what being called to be Franciscan means to different people.

Ongoing Formation Tools for Building Inclusive Community

Notes from Ellen Ferrone OFS: Members of the St Elizabeth of Hungry Fraternity, Augusta, GA gave a presentation on some of the tools they use in their Ongoing Formation at the Fraternity Gathering. As always, the goal of ongoing formation is to deepen our faith in our continuing conversion process. We have been blessed to have wonderful presenters and topics that help us explore who we are and who our Sisters and Brothers are. Yet as we all know communication can be tricky. So here is a great tool, which I'm sure we've all been introduced to and is worth revisiting. Not only in our gathering space but also in all our interactions.

Respectful Communication Guidelines

- R = take RESPONSIBILITY for what you say and feel without blaming others
- E – use EMPATHETIC listening
- S = be SENSITIVE to differences in communication styles
- P = PONDER what you hear and feel before you speak
- E = EXAMINE your own assumptions and perceptions
- C = keep CONFIDENTIALITY
- T = TRUST ambiguity because we are NOT here to debate who is right or wrong

From Lynn Oeser's notes: Our Brothers and Sisters also shared and demonstrated the process that they use for ongoing formation: *At each gathering the assignment and questions for the next month's formation are handed out. Brothers and sisters come prepared with written responses. This gives each individual time for deeper reflection and personal formation. *Mutual invitation is used as an

inclusion/participation tool in small groups that has proven to be effective for them.

*A corresponding article of the rule is included and emphasized with every formation session.

To The Nations Mission

Stephen Smith OFS, missionary and Founder of "To the Nations" gave an annual update. Currently they are raising funds for wells for three villages. Children in these villages face violence and disease as they walk miles to collect water for their families. Stephen has delegated leadership duties but still remains very active. The ministry feeds 500 children every day, builds homes for widows, has dug 9 wells for villages, built 11 soup kitchens, provides clothing and healthcare for thousands of children. It also helps to create self-sustaining projects like piggeries, chicken projects plumbing, masonry and photography. They also support young adults pursuing a future as pharmacists, plumbers, tailor, IT specialists, youth ministers and priests. Stephen holds back tears as he tells of the love, the life, the music, the celebration of these very poor children. To the Nations Missions is run exclusively on donations and there is zero overhead. In addition to Uganda he now takes missionaries to Haiti, Colombia and Jamaica.

By S. Lynn Oeser, OFS



Steven Smith, OFS of To The Nations greeting Carolyn Townes, OFS National and Regional JPIC Animator.

Deepening our Franciscan Vocation and Holy Cross Retreat Center, New Mexico

– Joshua Molitor OFS, National Councilor

As you are aware the Regional Elections took place at the ARG. When elections are held, a representative from the National Council conducts the election. Joshua Molitor was the representative who conducted the election. He is a passionate speaker and had much to share from his heart.

Joshua spoke on two topics. The first was growing our Fraternities. A topic we might not think of very often, yet is really a natural extension of who we are as Franciscans. As Franciscans, individually and as a fraternity, we rely on relationships. These are relationships we have with our families, our Fraternity member and our extended communities. Joshua spoke of a personal invitation: Do we share our faith and our Franciscan charism with others? Do we invite them to participate in our gatherings, attend our Come & See? Secondly, have we built personal relationships with the Friars and Priests in our communities by letting them know who we are and that we would welcome their participation in sharing that knowledge with those who might be called to the SFO way of life? And thirdly, have we built a relationship with our Bishop, the shepherd over a large region who can support and share whom we are? Joshua's love of being a Franciscan truly shone during this talk.

For the second topic, Joshua spoke about the work going on at the Holy Cross Retreat Center, Messilla Park, New Mexico. He spoke of Donna Hollis, National Councilor and the work her Fraternity, Our Lady of Guadalupe Fraternity in Las Cruces, is doing with the refugees who have been released from detention centers offering respite for those traveling to find a safe place for themselves and their families. At the height of the crisis, there were 700 people crossing the border at El Paso. These are people who walk across raising their hands in the air and are legally seeking asylum. The numbers had slowed down to 300 a week, and now because of current policy the people are staying in Juarez, Mexico while they wait for papers to enter the USA. Joshua talked about fraternity members traveling to Las Cruces to offer their help and giving those that live there a time of rest. He issued a call to "Go and assist those working at the border." He closed by saying we need to be out and about serving attract the young people. *By Ellen Ferrone, OFS*

Servant Leadership Carol King OFS, St Clare of Assisi Fraternity

In spite of significant technical difficulties, Carol's presentation was impactful, mostly because she was passionate about her topic. Carol was never rattled because they would not play. She did a great job of summarizing the many videos, always with humor. Carol was clearly a woman who knew the Holy Spirit was guiding her.

Her key points were building trust, stating that leaders must always be trusted. Leaders selflessly serve. She talked about the wisdom of geese, how they take turns in the leadership role, when they get tired, they move to the back of the V formation and let stronger ones take over. When one is hurt or sick and falls behind, two geese will accompany them until they have recovered and return to the flock or wait with them until they die. Words for any Leader!

Leaders must:

- Help develop a shared vision
- Awaken and enliven the desire to live out the vision
- Provide the know-how to accomplish the vision
- Preserve unity in the Fraternity
- Promote renewal in the Fraternity
- Nurture and support others, help them develop their own leadership style.

It we are to work together, we need to recognize our own gifts as well as those of our Sisters and Brothers, to enhance each persons gifts for the greater good of the whole. *By Ellen Ferrone,*

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Thanks to Maureen Copan, OFS, Ellen Ferrone, OFS, Michael Hancock, OFS, Joan Monti, OFS, and S. Lynn Oeser, OFS, for the pictures.

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**ARG August 7-9, 2020**  
**Joanita Nellenbach, OFS announced that the**  
**guest speaker next year**  
**will be**  
**Fr. Dan Horan, OFM**