

Secular Franciscan Order

FRANCISCAN MIRROR

SUMMER
2007

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

Photo by BOB STRONACH, SFO



A Spirit-Filled Gathering

Ceil Beard, SFO, and Rob Breen, SFO, spurred some impromptu folk-singing during the Regional Gathering and Chapter of Elections. National Minister Patrick Mendés, SFO, presided over the elections, and National Spiritual Assistant Fr. Kevin Queally, TOR, conducted a pastoral visitation.
SEE PAGE 6.

Mary Frances Charsky Is Regional Minister

- SEE PAGE 3 -



Mary Frances Charsky, SFO, relates how she was humbled by the confidence placed in her with her election as servant-leader of the Bl. Kateri Tekakwitha Region of the Secular Franciscan Order. She will serve a three-year term.

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FRANCISCAN
MIRROR

SUMMER 2007

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**Minister's
Message**

By MARY FRANCES CHARSKY, SFO

Greetings to all Secular Franciscans of the Blessed Kateri Tekawitha Region.

Pax et bonum! Thanks be to God!

To those who gathered at the annual meeting, thank you for your confidence in us during the elections. We hope to pray together, serve together and laugh together joyfully as we serve you as the regional council.

Many thanks go to Bill Heinz for his servant leadership as minister and to all the members of the regional council for their successful service and leadership to us during their past terms. May God continue to bless them.

It was wonderful to meet our national SFO minister, Patrick Mendés, and Fr. Kevin Queally, TOR, the pastoral visitor, at Stella Maris. They both demonstrate the true spirit of St. Francis.

Please pray for each other and the regional council as we discern and do God's will in the spirit of St. Francis and St. Clare.

The Lord bless you and keep you!

The Lord let his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you!

The Lord look upon you with mercy

And give you peace!

MARY FRANCES CHARSKY SUCCEEDS BILL HEINZ AS REGIONAL MINISTER

Mary Frances Char- sky, SFO, of Bingham- ton is the new regional minister of Bl. Kateri Tekakwitha Region.

Ministers and del- egates from local frater- nities across the region elected her April 28 dur- ing the annual regional gathering held at Stella Maris Retreat Center in Skaneateles, NY.

The first woman to hold the position since the region was formed in 1994 out of the former Third Order provinces, Mary Frances will serve for three years before the next Chapter of Elections. She succeeds William Heinz, SFO, of Lewiston, NY.

Tim Suspanic, SFO, minister of St. Francis Fraternity in Bingham-



New Regional Minister Mary Frances Char- sky, SFO, with outgoing Minister Bill Heinz, SFO.

ton, formally accepted the election on her be- half since she was kept away by illness and lar- yngitis for the first two days of the gathering. With the viral infection subsiding and her voice returning, Mary Frances joined the gathering Sunday morning and was greeted by applause and hugs.

She related how she thought Suspanic was playing a joke when he called to say she was elected, and was hum- bled by the confidence placed in her

An elementary school principal (Donnelly Elementary School in



***Kim Marks, SFO
New Vice Minister***

Conklin), Mary Frances Char- sky was professed Oct. 4, 1981, and has been a member of St. Francis Fraternity in Binghamton for 25 years.

In her church she has been Eucharistic minis- ter, member of the par- ish council, and member of the adult formation and social justice com- mittees.

Other newly elected officers are:

- Vice Minister **Kim- berly Marks, SFO**, of Cheektowaga, NY.
 - Secretary **Marie Meyer, SFO**, of Buffalo.
 - Treasurer **Donna Roberti, SFO**, of War- ren, PA.
 - Formation Director **Patti DeWitt, SFO**, of Buffalo.
 - Eastern Area Coun- cilor **Catherine (Katie) Koscinski, SFO**, of Utica, NY.
 - Central Area Coun- cilor **Robert Stronach, SFO**, of Marcy, NY.
 - Western Area Coun- cilor **Frank Guglielmo, SFO**, of Cheektowaga, NY.
- Continued on next page.*

YES, RUTH IS MINISTER

Ruth Stanek, SFO, minister of St. Francis Fraternity of Endicott, and other fraternity members were surprised to read in the spring issue of the *Mirror* that she was elected vice minister. Apologies to Ruth and the fraternity. Ruth was elected minister, and Shirley Uhrinec was elected vice minister.

Continued from previous page.

PROFESSED in November 1987, Vice Minister Kim Marks was western area councilor for the past four years, and prior to that, was Apostolic Commissions chair and Family Commission chair. She was actively involved in establishing/reactivating St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity in Buffalo.

Kim is client services representative for Uniform Data System for Medical Rehabilitation, and is assistant production manager and tech assistant with Shea's Performing Arts Center.

She has chaired the planning committee for BKTR annual meetings.

PROFESSED Dec. 15, 1996, Secretary Marie Meyer is minister of St. Patrick Fraternity, Buffalo. She recently retired from Kaleida Health (Buffalo General Hospital).

Through the fraternity, she works with the AIDS community. She helped organize an annual SFO

Wall of Honor

In Memory Of

Carmella Delello SFO
remembered by
St. Agnes of Assisi Fraternity, Afton, NY

In Honor Of

Al Picogna, SFO
Six Years As Our Minister
by Our Lady of Angels Fraternity, Lewiston

Ed & Mary Zablocki, SFO
25th Anniversary of Profession
by St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity, Buffalo

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

Day in the western area. In her parish she is Eucharistic minister and lector, and active in the Altar-Rosary Society. She has been involved with the Spirit and Life Committee, taught CCD, and led the RCIA program for many years.

PROFESSED Sept. 21, 1997, Treasurer Donna Roberti was regional treasurer for the past

three years. She retired from United Refining Co., Warren, PA where she was CPA-manager of corporate taxes.

Donna is active in St. Bonaventure Fraternity in Allegany, NY, where she was minister for six years. In her parish she is a Eucharistic minister, lector, Altar Rosary member, and coordinator for the "Why Catholic?" faith-sharing program.

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT with Cephas Prison Ministry in Buffalo, and an artist, Formation Director Patti DeWitt was received into the order in high school at Sacred Heart Academy. She went on to become minister of St. Francis Fraternity, Buffalo. For the region, she has been vice minister, western area councilor, and for the past three years, formation director. In her church, she is lector and Eucharistic minister. Patti completed the Franciscan Servant Leadership Course with the Institute for Contemporary Franciscan Life, and the Certificate in Pastoral Studies at Christ the King Seminary.

PROFESSED Feb. 28, 1998, Eastern Area Councilor Katie Koscinski is minister of St. Joseph Fraternity, Utica. A retired mental health worker, she is involved in her parish as a commissioned catechist, Eucharistic minister, lector and RCIA facilitator.

In the community, she volunteered as an usher at the Stanley Perform-



Marie Meyer, SFO
Secretary



Donna Roberti, SFO
Treasurer



Patti DeWitt, SFO
Formation Director



Katie Koscinski, SFO
Eastern Councilor



Bob Stronach, SFO
Central Councilor



Frank Guglielmo, SFO
Western Councilor

ing Arts Center, serves on the RPEA Steering Committee, and is a Bill Payer Program volunteer for Family Services of Mohawk Valley.

PROFESSED June 15, 2003, Central Area Councilor Bob Stronach has been active on the local, regional and national levels. He is vice minister for St. Joseph Fraternity, Utica. For the regional fraternity, he and his wife, Mary, are Apostolic Commissions co-coordinators and co-

editors of *Franciscan Mirror*. On the national level they are PR co-chairs and *Tau-USA* special assignment editors.

Bob works with his wife in the family creative communications business.

In his parish, he is a Eucharistic minister.

PROFESSED in June 1983, Western Area Councilor Frank Guglielmo is minister of St. Thomas More Fraternity, Kenmore-Cheek-towaga. He helped start

the fraternity in January of 1984, and previously served a couple of terms as minister. In his parish, Frank coordinates Eucharistic Adoration and new parishioner welcoming. He is involved in the Strategic Planning Committee/Parish Council. A retired assistant administrator at Roswell Park Cancer Center in Buffalo, Frank has been active in Roswell's Kevin Guest House (for families of out-of-town cancer patients).

SFOS GATHER FOR KATERI MASS AT TUSCARORA NATION

Secular Franciscans in the western area invite SFOS throughout the region to join them for an annual gathering in conjunction with the Bl. Kateri Tekakwitha Mass at 6 p.m. Saturday, July 14, in Holy Family Chapel, 5180 Chew Road, Tuscarora Indian Nation, Sanborn, NY

The celebrant will be Fr. Peter Calabrese, CRSP, pastor.

After mass, Franciscans will gather at the Old Country Buffet in Niagara Falls for a meal. The price is \$11.33 a person.

Please RSVP by June 30 to either Pat Roberts, SFO, 716-297-3707, or Bill Heinz, SFO, 716-754-4971, LBHeinzSFO@aol.com.

YOU ARE OUR FRANCISCAN CHARISM ALIVE!

National Minister J. Patrick Mendés, SFO, presided over the region's Chapter of Elections, and National Spiritual Assistant Kevin Queally, TOR, made a pastoral visitation during the annual gathering April 27-29.

By the end of the gathering, the national minister asserted:

"You are gracious, you are welcoming, you are our Franciscan charism alive!"

Father Kevin greeted ministers, delegates and observers by noting that the TOR (Third Order Regular) and the SFO "have the same beginning" as brothers and sisters of penance, the original lay followers of Francis.



National Minister J. Patrick Mendés, SFO, and National Spiritual Assistant Kevin Queally, TOR.

"We were one order for the first 200 years," he said. "It's with great joy that I come to you

as your brother." (The TOR operates, among other ministries, St. Francis University

in Loretto, PA, where Fr. Kevin is stationed, and Franciscan University in Steubenville, OH.)

After introducing the national leaders Friday morning, outgoing Regional Minister Bill Heinz, SFO, said it had "really been a pleasure serving you" and that he couldn't have done it without his wife, Laura Heinz, SFO. He also thanked the Executive Council for making his job easier.

"Frankly, this council has supported this region very well," he said. "Spiritually we pray together, we share together, we are family... Prayer is very powerful. It's responsible for a lot of good



Dorothy Gavin, SFO, & Marie Meyer, SFO Carolyn Barth, SFO, Jane Meissner, SFO, and Catherine Schmidt, SFO

works they've done.”

As ministers, he noted, “we’re only servants; we’re foot-washers,” working in concert with the fraternity council.

“We need that love, that family,” he added, not only in the local fraternity, but also on the regional, national and international levels, and in our relationship with the First Orders and Third Order Regular.

Reporting on the state of the region, Bill said there were 32 fraternities (throughout upstate New York and north-western Pennsylvania). During his tenure, several fraternities were canonically established (most recently Holy Family in Vernon, NY, and St. Irenaeus in West Carlsville, NY), while a



Leading the singing in Chapel: Ann Thomas, SFO, Ceil Beard, SFO, and Mary Smith, SFO.

couple of others became inactive. The number of professed members continues to decline, currently standing at 490. Also, there are only about 20 spiritual assistants involved in the region’s fraternities.

“I have been encouraged by the number of inquirers and candidates,” he noted, with fraternities reporting 21 inquirers and 39 candidates in the most recent

annual reports.

“We’re not looking for numbers. We’re looking for quality...for vocations. Your screening is important.”

He added: “Remember, a lot of vocations come from us. They see what we do, how we act, and they see our Tau.” Wearing the Tau does attract “a lot of questions.”

He also thanked fraternities for their Fair

Share contributions. “Remember, it’s our responsibility on the local level to support the regional, national and international levels,” he said, emphasizing that Fair Share is the responsibility of the fraternity, not individual members.

A PLUG FOR THE Q

After Bill’s report, the national minister and national spiritual assistant took a moment to plug the Quinquennial Congress, which takes place July 3-8 in Pittsburgh, PA.

It will be replete with on-going formation, Patrick said, with Father Kevin adding: “It’s a wonderful Franciscan-family experience.”

The “Q’s” multi-cultural
Continued on next page.



Tim Suspanic, SFO, and Bill Geary, SFO



Walt Chura, SFO



FAMILY OF YEAR: Mary and Ed Zablocki, SFO

tural theme reflects the growing diversity within the U.S. church and the Secular Franciscan Order, they said. Hispanic, Korean, Vietnamese and Eastern Rite Secular Franciscans will be in attendance.

In addition to multicultural presentations by multi-cultural expert Eric Law, an Episcopal priest, there will be a number of on-going formation presentations by Secular Franciscan

educators and experts, as well as break-out sessions facilitated by Secular Franciscan leaders. Friars from the OFM, Conventual, Capuchin and TOR orders will be participating.

FAMILY OF YEAR

Bill Heinz presented the *Family of the Year Award* to Ed and Mary Zablocki, SFO, who were professed 25 years ago and who helped

start St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity in Buffalo, which met weekly. Their children grew up in the fraternity, which was aimed at families with children.

Exploring the Franciscan charism was part of Ed's conversion back to the church. Shortly after they were professed, Ed and Mary moved into a double house with Patti and Dave DeWitt, SFO, to live the Franciscan charism together.

Currently serving as the regional Work Commission co-chairs, and as formation director and vice minister of their fraternity, Ed and Mary were national Work Commission co-chairs for six years (1995-2000), plus they coordinated the All-Commissions Confer-

ence at St. Bonaventure University in 1999, and the 25th Anniversary of the Rule Conference at St. Bonaventure in 2003.

Ed is a research administrator at University of Buffalo, and Mary is a registered nurse. Ed wrote a study guide to Franciscan Fr. Bob Stewart's book on the origins and development of the SFO rule, which is one of the correspondence courses offered by St. Francis University, Loretto, PA.

SERVANT LEADER AWARDS

Bill Heinz announced that the Region was establishing the Edward S. Czaplak Servant-Leader Award to recognize inspiring servant leadership in the Secular Franciscan Order. It is named after



Mary Hogan, SFO



Sheila Obzud, SFO



Don Watkins, SFO



Burt Weigen, SFO



SERVANT LEADER: Bill Heinz, SFO, and Ed Czapl, SFO

its first recipient, long-time leader and advisor Ed Czapl, SFO. Ed played a key role in the formation of the Region, was its first elected regional minister, and continues to serve the Executive Council as an advisor. His just-published booklet, "In the Footsteps of Francis and Clare: Historical Perspective of the SFO," was distributed at the gathering.

After surprising Ed with the award, Bill received a surprise himself – as Formation



Bill & Laura Heinz, SFO

Director Patti DeWitt, SFO, speaking on behalf of the outgoing Executive Council, announced that Bill and Laura Heinz would be the second recipients of the Edward S. Czapl Servant-Leader Award. She said the award rec-

2008 BUDGET APPROVED

Ministers and delegates unanimously approved the 2008 regional budget, which projects income and expenditures of \$32,000. Expenditures include:

Spiritual assistant stipend	\$3,500
Other stipends	500
NAFRA Fair Share	5,100
Travel & mileage	6,500
Conferences/meetings	2,500
Annual regional gathering	7,500
General supplies/expenses	350
Postage	400
Telephone & database	350
Newsletter (printing/ mailing)	4,000
Commissions	1,000
Other expense	300

ognized "their Franciscan spirit of peace, their treating and promoting of the region as family, and their untold hours of self-less service facilitating, guiding, supporting."

PRESENTATIONS

Following Saturday morning's Service of Remembrance, which memorialized deceased Franciscans in all fraternities, Ed and Mary

Continued on next page.



Marie Diehl, SFO



Mary Walker, SFO

Continued from previous page

Zablocki gave a presentation on the Work Commission. In the development of secular spirituality, work is an integral component, Ed said. "Work is a gift and a grace," added Mary.

Next, Ecology/Youth-Young Adult Commissions Chair Rob Breen, SFO, pushed up the window shades and pointed outside, saying:

"This is my whole show. It's beautiful weather." Even though the sky was overcast and rain had been falling, he described it as a beautiful part of the cycle that creates a sustainable Earth.

What struck him about the story of Fran-



Rob Breen, SFO, points out the window for his "presentation".

cis and Clare, he said, was that they were young people who left a privileged lifestyle and discovered God in creation, starting a movement that continues to inspire people today – especially young people. He noted that his

pilot young adult formation program, conducted under the auspices of Holy Family Fraternity in Vernon, would culminate in the region's first young adult profession, with five young adults scheduled to be professed in June.

"Exposing youth to ecology and to Franciscan/Catholic teaching on ecology led to their interest in the Franciscan charism."

PASTORAL VISITATION

Father Kevin pointed out that Article 30 of the General Constitutions

says every member is "co-responsible for the life of the fraternity."

"Each of us has a stake," he said, and "it doesn't stop at the local and regional levels."

Quoting former National Minister Carol Gentile, SFO, he said:

"Our vision today is to reflect Christ in our thoughts, words and actions... How? By acknowledging that fraternity is a sacred and witnessing place."

He asked: "Is the fraternity a joyful and welcoming place? Is it life-giving?"

That's how we "will



Rita Mandyck, SFO; David Green, SFO; Ruth Stanek, SFO; David Pope, SFO

attract not only spiritual assistants, but vocations.”

He gave the example of one fraternity that was down to six members and in danger of dying out – until they made a commitment to one another to go through formation again. As they re-lived the formation process,

they became bonded, and “as people visited, they saw a loving group in formation.” Another commitment they made to each other was that three times a year each would invite one person to a gathering.

“In five years they professed 10 new people.”

Regarding Bl. Kateri Tekakwitha Region, he said he was “very impressed with the elections” and “with the outgoing council.”

“Your hospitality is as Franciscan as it could be!”



Fr. Kevin Queally, TOR

HELP SPONSOR THE MIRROR

We are looking for sponsors to help defray the cost of printing so that the Regional Fraternity can continue to improve your *Franciscan Mirror*... with more color, more pages, more features.

Individuals, fraternities and businesses may sponsor one or multiple issues, and receive recognition in a 6"x1" ad.

\$100 – ad on inside page.

\$150 – ad on inside cover.

\$200 – ad on 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 at stronach@kateriregion.org.

YOU CAN PARTICIPATE 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 the form and mail it along with a \$10 donation.

Funds will be used by the Regional Fraternity 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).

Send completed form with check to:

The Franciscan Mirror, P.O. Box 232, Marcy, NY 13403

FRIAR ED COUGHLIN TO LEAD DAY OF REFLECTION



A Day of Reflection will be held in the western area of the region on Saturday, Nov. 3, featuring Franciscan friar and scholar, Bro. Ed Coughlin, OFM. Sponsored by the Sisters of St. Francis and Bl. Kateri Tekakwitha Region, the event will begin with Mass at 9 a.m. at St. Mary of the Angels Motherhouse, 201 Reist St., Williamsville, NY.



Brother Ed will give two presentations in the morning, and two in the afternoon after lunch, expounding on the topic, *“Francis’ Story/My Story: Ongoing Conversion as Our Way of Life.”*



Bro. Ed Coughlin

Brother Ed is vice president for the Franciscan Mission at St. Bonaventure University and an associate professor

in the School of Franciscan Studies. He is former director of the Franciscan Institute there.

“There is no cost for Secular Franciscans to attend,” reports Ed Zablocki, SFO, coordinator. “Our region’s support is through the Alma Kraus Memorial Endowment.”

Secular Franciscans need to register in advance by calling Zablocki’s home at 716-838-4178 or emailing him at zablocki@research.buffalo.edu. Registration deadline is Oct. 3.

The Central Area is hoping to host Brother Ed’s presentation in the spring of 2008, and the Eastern Area, in the fall of 2008.

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