



# Good News Report

Secular Franciscan Order  
Trillium Regional Fraternity



Number 79

Spring 2017

## A MOMMENT WITH THE MNISTER

We will soon be celebrating the great feast of Easter and I was reflecting upon the words of St. Clare in her Fourth Letter to Agnes,

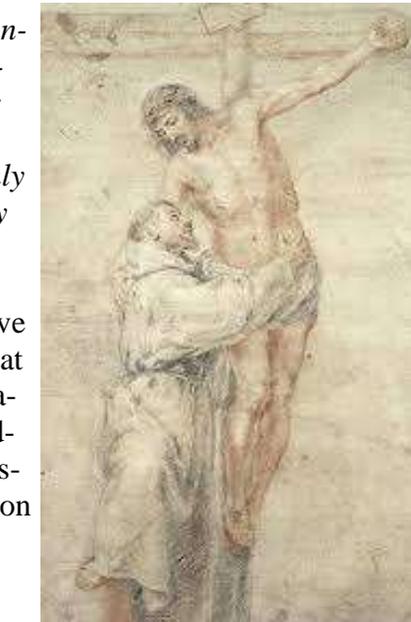


*"Indeed, ponder the final days of this mirrored one, contemplate the ineffable love with which he was willing to suffer on the tree of the cross and to die there a kind of death that is more shameful than any other. That mirror suspended upon the wood of the cross from there kept urging those passing by of what must be considered, saying: O all you who pass by this way, look and see if there is any suffering like my suffering. In response let us with one voice and in one spirit answer him who is crying out and lamenting: I will remember this over and over and my soul will sink within me. Therefore, seeing this, O queen of the heavenly King, you must burn ever more strongly with the fervour of charity!"*

As we pass by a crucifix do we look, really look at the suffering and love endured there? Are we burning with that fervour for charity? We experience a variety of emotions during the Easter Triduum from the celebration of Holy Thursday and the Last Supper, onto the Passion and death of Jesus on Good Friday and concluding with the Resurrection of Christ on Easter morning. St. Clare has said it clearly; contemplate the ineffable love with which He was willing to suffer on the tree of the cross; the indescribable love that our Lord has for each one of us. It makes me feel very humble and very much as St. Francis was, in love with the Crucified One!

The Chapter of Elections is upon us once again. Those three years seem to fly by at least for me. Your Regional Council, Area Councillors and support people who do much behind the scenes have made this a wonderful term of office for myself. Meeting, greeting, presiding, and presenting are just some of the activities that we were involved in this term. For myself, I made many new friends.

The Agenda for the weekend and the Registra-



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## SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT

We might say that for St. Francis, Easter was not so much an event but more a journey, a process. Like St. Paul, Francis could declare: *All I want to know is Christ and the power flowing from His Resurrection!* Francis' road to Easter began with an encounter with Jesus Crucified. Praying before the crucifix in the church of San Damiano Francis heard Jesus tell him: *Francis, rebuild My house!*



Throughout his life St. Francis contemplated and imitated Jesus in the mysteries of His poverty and humility. Seraphic love even compelled him to ask Christ to grant him to feel in his body the pains of the Passion and to feel in his heart the love which urged Jesus to die for us sinners. God answered his prayer with the imprinting of the Sacred Stigmata, making St Francis *an icon of the Crucified Jesus.*

Yet, Francis' immersion in the mysteries of the Passion did not make him sad or sombre. Rather, the sorrows of the Lord opened Francis to a deeper, truer joy. The wounds of Christ's Passion which the Poor Man bore were in truth signs of spiritual resurrection, God visibly confirming Francis' passage through death to life.

Francis' Easter newness was the fruit of his union with the Crucified and Risen Lord. This union is the secret of the Little Poor Man's joy, his enthusiasm for the things of God, his unique relationship with creation. Illness, pain, disappointment and misunderstanding still marked Francis' earthly pilgrimage. But, he saw these sufferings in a new light. He understood that through them, God was making all things work toward an eternal good, an eternal Easter

When composing his Office of the Cross, the Seraphic Father included a special Office for the Easter season. Yet even in the solemn Offices

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tions forms have been sent out. Please have your forms back to me by the 20th of this month. We look forward to spending time together as Franciscans and to choosing our leaders for the next three years.

We welcome your nomination forms for any position on Council. We have had some nominations but more are always welcomed.

We are those living stones called to build up the Kingdom. **Step forward when you are called to serve.** The Lord will always be with you....” And He will never leave you orphaned.” Once the Regional Council is elected there are other positions that need to be filled. We are always in need of Area Councillors and people to help with the smooth running of the Region.

Deus meus et omnia;  
Catherine Payne



(Continued from page 1)

for Holy Week, the thought of Resurrection is present: *Arise, my glory! Arise, lyre and harp! I will arise at dawn! I have slept and risen and my most Holy Father has received me in glory.*

Our Lord made St Francis an Easter Saint, a singer of the new song of Redemption. In the “Exhortation to the Praise of God,” Francis sang as his own the hymn of those who stand before the Throne of God in heaven: *Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power, glory and honour!*

His song of Easter triumph is likewise that of the Church on earth: *This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!*

Fr. Peter Knaapen O.F.M. Conv

**THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC MISSION THIS YEAR** is inspired by the writings and teachings of Fr. Henri Nouwen. Join Sr. Sue Mosteller and Fr. Ron Rolheiser for this two part Mission that will be broadcast during Holy Week on Salt & Light TV (April 11-12) and on Vision TV (April 10-11). Each part of the Mission will be rebroadcast the following day after the Daily TV Mass. Food for the soul!



(excerpts from) **'THE GRACE OF GIVING'** <https://www.franciscanmedia.org/the-grace-of-giving/>

When Gary (a close family member who had been homeless) eventually came to live with us... with each passing day, the reign of God was revealed to me in unexpected ways. Gary's ...gratitude was palpable, but gradually I realized there is more to the reign of God than basking in the glow of being a “good Samaritan.”

The reign of God is also present in the day-to-day challenges and tensions that accompany family life. It is present when we work through disagreements, choose to overlook a thoughtless remark, or extend an olive branch after a disagreement. When I felt impatient, was tempted to judge, or gave in to discouragement, I saw Jesus in Gary: Jesus the teacher, challenging me to rethink my need to fix and control rather than discover the hidden grace within the challenges that are part of life.

Daily I witnessed the reign of God being released as Gary appeared more confident of our love and concern. As his invisible wounds continued to heal, Gary was able to initiate simple acts of kindness, preparing meals for us, even surprising us with tokens of appreciation. This was the reciprocal dimension that comes with giving, which may explain why so many homeless individuals express their gratitude for whatever they receive by saying, “God bless you.”

Hidden within every act of giving and receiving is a type of divine energy that is released. It raises up those who have been cast down and awakens in the giver a deeper appreciation for the goodness of the other. And so both are blessed by God. The experience may be fleeting, and they may not even recognize it, but in that moment when the worth of the afflicted person is acknowledged, he or she is empowered to bless the other.

... When we treat someone with the respect he or she deserves, the reign of God is revealed and hearts are transformed. And through the act of giving, both the giver and receiver are changed. In fact, it might be difficult to distinguish who is gifted more through the experience.

The encounter is not simply about the few dollars that have been placed in the palm of another’s hand,

but about a sense of solidarity that is established between the giver and the receiver. A few dollars will do little to change the status or temporal well-being of a poor person, but with each gift, he or she is reminded that life matters and that he or she deserves a better life. Each time we give, we unleash the power of God, since every act of kindness done in the name of God reminds the giver, the receiver, and any bystanders that we have been called to love our neighbour as ourselves.

Perhaps few people understood this better than Saint Francis of Assisi. **When Francis embraced the leper at the crossroads of his life, both Francis and the leper were changed.** Perhaps for the first time since the disease invaded his body, the leper experienced the power of love through the gentle touch of another human being. The act became a defining moment for both the saint and the leper. God had chosen an outcast of society to be a conduit of grace that would transform a conflicted young man into one of the greatest saints in the Catholic Church. The reign of God was made present, and in that moment both lives were touched by God.

From then on, Francis was drawn to lepers because each encounter became an encounter with Christ and an opportunity for Francis to be Christ. As he went about tenderly anointing their disfigured bodies with the chrism of love, Francis became another Christ for the lepers. And so it was that the power of divine love was unleashed in the hills of Assisi, just as it had been when Jesus of Nazareth traveled the dusty roads of Galilee. That same power is being released today on street corners, in homeless shelters, and around kitchen tables, as it was in our home.

Just as Jesus showed us what the reign of God looked like when he reached out and shared his love with the least and the lowly, so he invites us to be agents of change by continuing the mission he began. It was not a one-and-done event, but is evolving, and all who follow in his footsteps are part of the process.

When Gary came to live with us, God was using Gary's presence in our home to awaken in me the need to examine old ways of thinking. Early on, Gary voiced certain dietary preferences, and I admit to feeling indignant. I thought that he should be grateful for whatever we set before him. But as I prayed about my resistance, I began to realize that such thoughts were rooted in a sense of superiority that had no place in Christian charity. After all, why should I be allowed certain preferences while denying someone who is my brother in Christ the same?

.. I learned so much from being in the company of those who are homeless. ...Being around homeless individuals has called me to question the importance I place on material possessions and has challenged me to strive for a deeper trust in God. In serving others, I am learning that the reign of God is not stagnant, but ongoing and a life-giving reality that is present when we are open to both giving and receiving.

**I also came to realize that charity is not about replacing the face of the homeless with the face of Jesus.** Charity is about actually seeing the face of the homeless. It is about looking into the eyes of the poor, the suffering, and the marginalized and treating them with the kind of love that Jesus afforded them. It is no longer enough to see Jesus in the face of people in need; I am being called to be Jesus for them. And then ... they become Jesus for me, wearing not the face of the one being served, but the one who is serving.

Such discoveries are ongoing and we grow into them slowly, not so different from the way Saint Francis... of Assisi, grew into understanding his role in the Church. When St. Francis heard the voice of Jesus speak to him from the cross at San Damiano, telling him to rebuild his church because it was falling to ruin, he began by repairing churches, stone by stone, until he discovered that the Lord was asking more of him.

Like Saint Francis, we may begin building the kingdom of God by performing small acts of kindness toward family and friends. But gradually, and in God's time, as our understanding of the reign of God deepens and we are open to setting aside old ways of thinking, we, too, will become aware of opportunities for greater service. And when we embrace them in the name of God, our hearts will overflow with perfect joy. Like Francis, we will discover

the irony of perfect joy: that it is in giving that we receive.



## VICE-MINISTER'S LETTER

### Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation

With Lent drawing to a close, we have recalled our own sinfulness and our own giftedness. We have shared both with our beloved Lord. He alone knows us better than we know ourselves and He loves us unconditionally. He alone reveals both Himself and Our self to us in gentle whispers and stirrings.

As Easter approaches, we prepare for renewal in a multitude of ways. We consider, in particular, our relationship with God and all of His creation.

We pray that we may grow in love, in justice and in peace. We pray this for ourselves, our fraternities and our order.

In the past year, the JPIC Commission, with the great help of Fr. Conrad, OFM, has developed a power-point presentation that address the question, "What is meant by Justice? What is meant by Peace?" This is now available in both English and Italian. (Korean and Polish are planned also)

This will be shown for the first time on April

30th at St. Peter's Fraternity. If no further changes are needed, we hope to then make the power-point available to the Region in various ways. (i.e. Regional website, via JPIC Liaisons, JPIC Commission reps, etc.)



I share my gratitude for those who have served on the JPIC Commission this past year. They are: **Catherine Lee, Joseph Lee, Maria Agueci, Donna Marks, Dhol Mariano, Cathy Payne and Donna Dooling.** It is my hope that this work will continue.

In May, we look forward to our Regional Chapter of Elections where we again are asked to enter into prayer for our order and especially our Region and its local fraternities.

May God's blessings be abundant as we enter into the spirit of renewal.

Peace and all good!!

*Louise Arruda, ofs*

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## VICE MINISTER'S ARTICLE

From the first vice minister's desk...

During this time of Lent I find myself reflecting on the words of the Holy Father, Pope Francis (<https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2017/02/07/170207b.html>).

He calls on all of us to see "the other" as a gift, and to see the Word as a gift. But one is dependent on the other. This is important to us, as Secular Franciscans, when we seek to go from Gospel to life and life to Gospel. In teaching us this lesson Pope Francis uses the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Lk. 16:19-31). He draws a parallel between that passage in Luke and what is happening in the world around us today. "A right relationship with people consists in gratefully

*recognising their value. Even the poor person at the door of the rich is not a nuisance, but a summons to conversion and to change."* Thus the person, the poor, the refugee, the immigrant becomes that gift to us, giving us a chance to make the Gospel real in our lives. Let us also not forget Matthew 25 "*For I was a stranger... and you gave me no welcome*". In light of this, the "Word" is a more essential gift.



Thus the "Word" gives us what we need, and to reject it, in deed or lack of action, we reject God.

Pope Francis says: "*At the root of all [the rich man's] ills was the failure to heed God's word. As a result, he no longer loved God and grew to despise his neighbour. The word of God is alive and powerful, capable of converting hearts and leading them back to God. When we close our heart to the gift of God's word, we end up closing our heart to the gift of our brothers and sisters.*" Thus one gift depends on the other. But it is up to us.

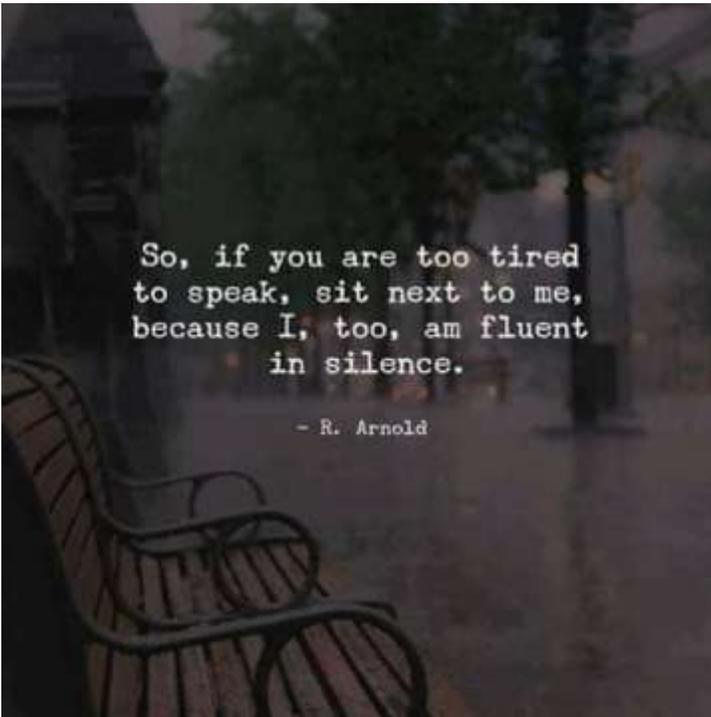
When someone in need knocks at our door, if and how we answer that call for help will determine how we will be judged. As Franciscans, we should know the answer and be prepared to help "the other".

Marzio Apolloni ofs  
First Vice Minister



## YOUTH ANIMATOR'S LETTER

This Lenten season I am trying to sit and be quiet. Teaching has been taking all of my energy, and so, I have been trying to sit with Our Lord to hear what He wants from me. I sit in silence trying to listen to the God who created me and died out of love for me.



There are many teachings of Jesus about which I know... but some of them have not made their way to my heart, and so I sit. Lent is a perfect time to sit with things. Jesus himself asked his disciples to sit with him while he was praying for the Cross to pass him by. He invites us to sit. He invites us to let Him roll the stone away and unbind our hurts if we believe in Him.

However, it can be difficult to sit and listen when our minds don't stop spinning and our hearts are not in it. Even writing this reflection is taxing for me because my heart is not in it, although I know God is with me.

I was talking to a priest in my hometown about this disconnect I have between my head (knowledge of the faith...) and heart (feeling His love). He asked me what my Myers-Briggs was. I told him I was an **ISFJ** (if you don't know what I am speaking about, Google 'ISFJ and the Myers-Briggs Personality Test'). Fr. Dave replied:

*'Feelings....hmmmm, yep something is not right. Do whatever your Spiritual Director has told you to do.'* So, I am sitting. Not able to make the connection. Waiting for the stone to roll and to be unbound.

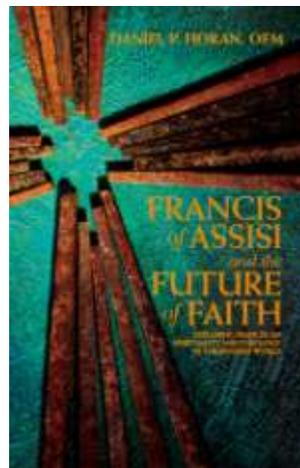
Today I received an email from the Daughters of St. Paul. In it, Sister Kathryn wrote: *"Lent is a path that leads us to more deeply encounter the soul-staggering mystery of God's love: a love that calls us by name, forgives us, invites us to conversion, heals us, nurtures us, and draws us into the very life of God." This is what I am trying to believe with my heart...the 'soul-staggering mystery of God's love.'*

Sister Kathryn also writes: *"These last days of Lent, I hear Jesus' invitation: 'Stay with me. Keep me company. Don't abandon me.'"*

And so, I sit and invite Him into my broken place as He shares His brokenness with me. Let us pray for one another that we have the courage to 'stay with Him' during these holy days.

## FRANCIS OF ASSISI AND THE FUTURE OF FAITH

... I cannot help but wonder whether we might find Francis on Facebook had he been born in our lifetime and not nearly a millennium ago. If he did not personally join Facebook or use Twitter or build a profile on LinkedIn, then I imagine that those friars who might find themselves compelled to reach out to others and preach the Gospel online might ask for his blessing. In return, Francis might give his approval as he did to St. Anthony of Padua when the friar asked if he could teach the other friars theology – something that seemed contrary to Francis's original "game plan" of Gospel living. Francis's response might read something like this: *"I am pleased that you want to*



*be present on Facebook and through other social media providing that, as is contained in the Rule, you 'do not extinguish the Spirit of prayer and devotion' during this activity."* And with that, a new age of mission and ministry would have begun.

~ Daniel Horan OFM,  
Francis of Assisi and the Future of Faith

## FROM THE TREASURER

### Elderly people in the Work of Evangelization.

The pastoral admonition "Go and preach" calls all of us to be missionaries - right where we live .

Once an elderly gentleman asked his pastor, "Father, so much is said about the new evangelization. How can I preach the Gospel if I'm 70 years old? I'm old and sick - I'm not going to go out on the street and evangelize there. " This question was the beginning of a beautiful conversation about the great potential that the elderly have, and about how they can serve the Church.

Old age is a vocation Pope Francis repeatedly reminds us that God calls us to follow him at every stage of our life, and adds: "Old age also includes a certain grace and mission, a true vocation from the Lord. Old age is vocation. There is no doubt that this period of life is different than before." Even though to some, old age means: idleness, reflection, sometimes sadness because of illness, and loneliness and even helplessness ... there is great potential in the elderly.

Grandparents have something that the younger generation may not yet have. Grandparents can help parents in many of the activities of their children with many of them.

Wisdom is the grandparents' greatest gift here, especially when things do not always go smoothly.

Witnesses of love To bear witness to your faith, not in an intrusive way, but to tell the story of your life so as to always accent the presence of God who stands by and cares for you because he loves you is a great role in the evangelization of the young generation.

There are many opportunities in our lives to talk about God. Time spent waiting in the doctor's office could be spend reading another gossiping newspaper - or used to talk about God with the person waiting there with me. An elderly person sharing how much God has done in her life is a beautiful testimony of the closeness of the Merciful Lord.

Our preaching is not to persuade someone to a certain form of piety, but always to show the Face of the Father. If someone discovers in us the



presence of God, then our job is done.

The virtue of life in the evangelization of the elderly is the value of life. In his letter to the elderly, Pope Saint John Paul II described it this way: "*Old people help us to look at earthly things wisely, because they have gained knowledge and maturity through life experiences. They are the guardians of collective memory and therefore have a special title to express the common ideals and values that underpin and govern the life of society.*" Many people underestimate the experience of life, and do not believe that they can greatly help others in proclaiming the Gospel.

Wisdom, which distinguishes what is important from what is invalid - what is urgent, from what can wait - is showing the proper hierarchy of values. Of course, evangelization is not about "grinding," constant attention, but about quiet, humble service, the testimony of everyday life. Pope Francis stresses that, through this wisdom, the elderly can "*remind the ambitious youth that life without love is sterile. To young people afraid or uncertain of the future, we can say that fear can be overcome by trusting in God. To the young one who loves himself too much, we can show that there is more joy in giving than in taking.*"



Gift of prayer The privilege of the elderly and their mission of evangelization is time that can be devoted to prayer: for loved ones, for the whole country, the whole Church. It would be really hard to live without this support of the sick, the afflicted and the elderly. Pope Saint John Paul II recalled the sight of his father praying, and emphasizing how

much grace he received through this prayer. Pope Francis summed up this unique charism: "*The prayers of the grandparents and the elders are a great gift to the Church! We may thank the Lord for his benefactors and to fill the abyss of ingratitude that surrounds him. We can intercede for the expectations of young generations and save the dignity and sacrifice of generations past.*"

Sometimes older people say that they have no strength to pray; they are so sleepy that they cannot finish a tenth of the rosary. That is OK, the desire to pray is what is important, not the technical details. Prayer brings us under the loving gaze of God. We don't have to be 'perfect' in prayer. God accepts our prayer because our love is what counts.

Each of us - however our strength allows - shares in the mission of proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Pax et Bonum  
Danuta Juchniewicz, o.f.s.

# Local Fraternity Bulletin Board

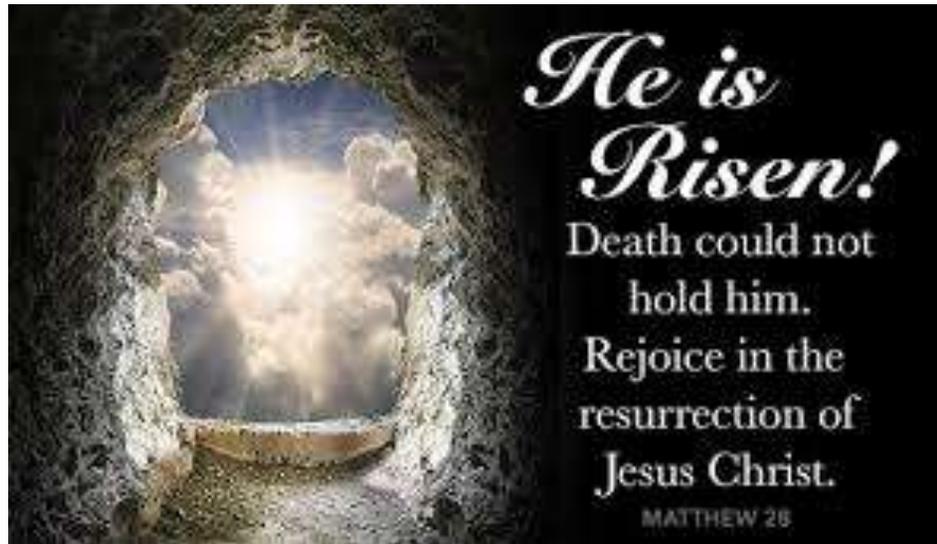
## OBITUARIES

We pray for the souls  
of.....

One of the founding members of **St. Damian Fraternity in London, Ontario**, Augustine Min ofs, passed away on December 28, 2016.

**St. Mary of the Angels Fraternity in Welland** has lost one of their members, Andrea Nigro ofs who died on March 7, 2017.

Msgr. Vincent Foy passed away March 13, 2017 at the age of 101. The 78th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood would have taken place this June. He was the longest serving priest in the history of the Archdiocese of Toronto.



Holy Rosary Fraternity in Belleville celebrated their elections on April 3, 2017. From ( L to R) Beverly MacDonald, Secretary; Eric MacDonald, Treasurer; Rose Marie MacMullen, Minister; Mary Olsen, Formation Minister; and Louise Tayti, Vice Minister. Congratulations to this newly elected Council.



Welcome the newly elected Council members, November 20, 2016, for St. Angela Merici Fraternity in Oshawa. From left to right: Donna Marks, Treasurer; Irene McEvers, Secretary; Louise Arruda, Trillium Region President; Teresa Viechweg, Minister; Hilda Rembala , Formation Director; Allen Frank, Vice-Minister.



On Nov. 20, Louise Arruda presented behalf presented Rosa Myers of St. Angela Merici Fraternity with the Regional Certificate to honour her 35 years as a professed Secular Franciscan. A big celebration was held afterwards.



The Trillium Region congratulates Eric MacDonald on his 35th anniversary as a Secular Franciscan. Eric is a member of Holy Rosary Fraternity in Belleville. He received his certificate on April 3, 2017.



Pictured here (L to R) Catherine Payne, Minister of Trillium Region; Mary Filangi, Minister of St. Peter's Fraternity, Woodbridge; Mary Reid, Minister of St. Anthony Of Padua Fraternity, Brampton; Father Michael Della Penna; Michael Dopp; and Frankie Burg-Feret, our hostess for the event.

On the evening of March 23, Mount Alverno Fraternity hosted a wonderful event with two guest speakers.

Fr. Michael Della Penna ofm spoke on truly living our faith in the world today.

Michael Dopp BBA: BA: STB:MDiv;STL gave an inspired talk on the New Evangelization.

There were over 50 Franciscans in attendance. Many thanks to Frankie-Burg-Feret (Minister of Mount Alverno Fraternity) for arranging this evening.

### Trillium Certificates

For Trillium Certificates to mark Professions, Anniversaries of Profession & Service Recognition for Spiritual Assistants, (usually 5 year milestones) please contact: **Clelia Malerba, ofs;** [malerbac@yahoo.com](mailto:malerbac@yahoo.com) Please apply in good time if you wish to have them on the profession day or anniversary date.

### The Good News Report

is the official newsletter of the Secular Franciscan Order, Trillium Region. We aim to publish it between the middle and end of: July, September, December, and April.

Any items you wish to include are warmly welcomed and will be published space permitting. Articles may be sent by the 8<sup>th</sup> of the month of publishing, to *Deacon maurice Prindiville, ofs,* [mprindiville@golden.net](mailto:mprindiville@golden.net)

Note: If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter, please let us know as above.