



# Federation of Christian Ministries

FCM Newsletter..January/February 2015...VOL. 50 NO. 1

# 2016

# Federation of Christian Ministries

Newsletter...VOL. 50 NO. 1 January/February - 2016



## Upcoming Elections

We will be preparing for several important elections in the next two months. They are for the positions of Chairperson, of Mountains and Plains Regional Vice President and of Pacific Regional Vice President.

Our Chairperson **Tom Stricker's** three year term ends in August with the Assembly. We will conduct a national election for Chairperson. **Tom** is eligible for a second three year term.

**Richard James** is completing **Michael Keefe's** second three year term. Mountains and Plains Region will hold an election. **Richard** is eligible for his first three year elected term.

**Donna Schreiber** is completing **Nick and Mary De Los Reyes'** second three year term. Pacific Region will hold an election. **Donna** is eligible for her first three year elected term.

Please give thought to nominations for these important positions. Then, add prayer and meditation for a successful outcome.

**Tom Cusack**, President



# Federation of Christian Ministries

Newsletter...VOL. 50 NO. 1 January/February - 2016



## A WORD FROM THE CHAIRPERSON...Tom Stricker

This past year was an exciting one for FCM, though I must say I am more excited about the year to come. It is hard to believe we are already in 2016. Time moves quickly. We continue to grow.

**Strategic Plan Develops Online...** We are in the process of development and implementation of our new Strategic Plan lead by our President **Tom Cusack**. I am grateful for the leadership he has given us.

We are breaking into new frontiers for FCM in the information technology areas: 2015 saw growth of our FCM blog, Facebook page and LinkedIn site.

The past year saw wonderful articles by our members speaking out concerning Social Justice issues. In all these areas we hope to continue to speak out clearly for those who have no voice and provide a platform for our membership to speak out and discuss issues. We are also investigating how we might stay connected through such services as Google Meetings. We are constantly seeking answers as to how do we grow and serve.

2016 will be the first full year for **Becky Cartus** in her position as newly appointed Director of Group Member Affairs. I am excited to have her as the support person for Group Membership. The coordination of current group members and the recruitment and establishment of new groups will be her main focus. Becky comes with a wealth of knowledge and talent.

**Members Respond to Call For Regional Area Reps...** Support and connection was the need spoken most by our membership in last year's survey and we have responded in the Strategic Plan to meet that need by the development of "Area Regional Representatives." These volunteers provide support for the Vice President who will reach out through them building connections and support systems among members within various areas in the region. In the last six months two of the Regions have already had four to five members volunteer for this position.

These representatives have begun organizing small group meetings within specific areas in their region. They have had anywhere from 4 to 12 FCM members gather in the homes of the representatives to pray, talk, listen and support each other in their ministries. One region has made it a goal to meet quarterly to gather membership in each area of their region. This is especially needed in regions that cover large areas where too often our members can feel isolated. The Area Representative is one answer. If you would like to volunteer for this position or know someone who would be good for this position, please call your Regional Vice President.

**National Assembly Takes Shape...** We have a dynamic National Assembly planned for this year. Bishop John Shelby Spong will be speaking twice on Saturday, August 6, Marianne Duddy-Burke, Executive Director, Dignity USA and Rev. John C. Dorhauer, General Minister and President of United Church of Christ are also on the schedule as keynote speakers. There will be workshop presenters leading discussions on serving the Hispanic Community, Small Faith Community development and addressing suicide issues to name a few. Please see the articles and registration information in this newsletter.

Register early and take advantage of the cost saving that are available to you. If you want to connect with FCM members nationwide mark your calendar for this exciting event, "With Open Arms."

Bring on 2016 lets grow build and continue to serve.

# Federation of Christian Ministries

Newsletter...VOL. 50 NO. 1 January/February - 2016



## A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT....Tom Cusack

### Community and Personal Growth

Each of us belongs to many different communities. We are citizens of the United States, our home state, and our city or town. We may be members of a clergy association or a professional association. In our entertainment time we may be a fan supporting the home town team with thousands of others. Communities give our lives structure, and it is no different in the world of those who follow the Christ.

Here we have thrown our lot in with the other members of FCM to form a community of people who take seriously the inner call to spread the Good News. This choice can carry significant implications for our use of time and our behavior going forward. Communities require care, involvement and the enrichment of members giving to the community. FCM is no different, and I suggest that its need is actually more intense than that of a geographically based community, such as a local church or parish. FCM is sprinkled across the length and breadth of the United States. In some of our regions we may have one or two people in an entire state. This creates significant challenges for the formation of community. Yet we know that it is in community that our own spiritual growth best takes place. Our Pacific VP, **Donna Schreiber**, reports that she has been using Google Groups to bring members together in discussion. You might experiment with this technology too. With community support we can take up the rigors of the spiritual life knowing that our friends in the community support and share our effort. And so we opt to build the FCM community. With strong community support we might become more effective Christian ministers

Our regional conferences this year brought FCM community building to the fore. Spending time with one another, whose experiences parallel and enlarge upon our own, has been very enriching. It gives a promise of what can be as we develop a greater sense of community in FCM. There are basic actions I want to call to your attention so that you might consider expanding the amount of time you give to them. The smallest unit of the FCM community is found in our ministerial colleague relationship. Consider building this relationship into a deeper and more meaningful supportive friendship. Have breakfast or lunch with your colleague every month or two. Possibly decide on a topic you will discuss during part of that meal together. Make it a topic that will deepen your ministerial insight and help your spiritual growth.

A new happening is the growth in our regions of the number of members stepping up to be an Area Representative. If you are in a town with more than one other member, please consider contacting your Vice President to volunteer to be an FCM Area Representative. You can then personally affect the quality of relationships within FCM.

We are focusing additional energy this year on enriching our FCM group members and increasing their number. If you are an FCM member leading a faith community or are a member of such a community, please open a conversation with our Director of Group Affairs, **Becky Cartus**. She is working on ways by which FCM can enrich small faith communities and thus accelerate the pace of spiritual growth in their members.

In our February Circle meeting we will be creating a formal Mentoring Program in FCM. In brief it would involve members with longer experience in their ministerial fields offering discussion time and support to members who have a shorter length of experience. This will develop within FCM an atmosphere conducive to growth in many areas.

Yet community alone is not sufficient for our own spiritual growth. We still have to commit personal and private effort, spending time in prayer and meditation. As you do this please keep in mind my desire that you spend **2 x 2 4 FCM**. That is, that you spend two minutes in prayer and two minutes in meditation in support of the way FCM carries out its slice of the mission of Christ. Also please give some thought to the question of whether you are now ready to spend **3 x 3 4 FCM** daily. That is a 50% increase in commitment, a big jump.

Thank you for opening the New Year as a member of FCM. It is an honor to be with you on this journey. Christmas has passed with its recollection of the in-breaking of God's saving action. We can safely say that our journey with the Prince of Peace is more important today than ever. Blessings for the New Year.



# Federation of Christian Ministries

Newsletter...VOL. 50 NO. 1 January/February- 2016



## Specialized Ministries

### Commissioning and Endorsement Timelines Critical

by Carl Yusavitz, Specialized Ministries Co-chair

Over the years, a number of people have come to FCM because they "need endorsement" in their ministry setting or are required to have some form of "ecclesiastical endorsement" by a national certifying body. During this time, we have also noticed that some of these people were unaware of FCM's long history as a reform movement in the wider Christian community and our evolution from an association of individuals to a convention of churches. Being unaware, a number of these people simply want a piece of paper from FCM that says they are "endorsed" by us.

When we engage these same people in conversation about FCM's mission and vision, some are truly enlightened and want to be a part of FCM, while others leave the conversation uninterested in FCM as a spiritual home. The people who find in us a new "spiritual home" readily commit themselves to active membership and the commissioning process (through a relationship with their regional VP) and follow through with our endorsement process. Because they are new to FCM, this process gives them time to know who we are and for FCM to know who they are.

Although we make exceptions for situations of hardship or unforeseen urgency, we strive to keep the commissioning and endorsement processes separate and sequential in terms of Circle meeting time periods. Why? To allow time to get to know one another and simply because commissioning and endorsement mean something different. Commissioning is our equivalent to "ordination" or "licensure" in many denominations and is what our commissioned members need to minister in general settings such as presiding at weddings, baptisms, and funerals.

Endorsement is different because it requires specialized training for ministry in specialized settings usually pluralistic secular settings such as hospitals, prisons, or counseling. It is often required by national certifying bodies like the Association of Professional Chaplains, the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education, the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy, and the American Association of Pastoral Counselors. Endorsement is an official declaration by FCM that a person is in good standing with us, has a relationship of clear accountability with us, and has met certain ethical and competency standards to serve in a specialized ministry. Endorsement also means that our endorsed members can represent FCM in specialized ministerial settings.

Our endorsement program provides our members with clear lines of accountability and access to consultation and pastoral support (through our Committee on Specialized Ministries), as well as opportunities for continuing education (through our national conferences and regional gatherings).

Our endorsement policies were developed with the help of seasoned endorser colleagues who make up the Association of Religious Endorsing Bodies (AREB) and are recognized by national certifying bodies. Because of those relationships, we have maintained our endorsement process with both rigor and integrity. If you have a member who thinks (s)he may qualify for a hardship exception or if you have any questions about the endorsement process, please contact our Committee on Specialized Ministries' chair or co-chair. Our contact information is on the FCM website and in every FCM newsletter.

# Federation of Christian Ministries

Newsletter...VOL. 50 NO. 1 January/February - 2016



## Director of Group Affairs...Rebecca Cartus

### Seed It - Need It - Feed IT

from A Thousand Mornings...The winter blahs. They blow in with the post-holiday blues right about this time of year. Life has been growing dark and short for months now. But not that we notice. We rush from the Labor Day picnic to the Halloween dress up, stopping to catch our breath briefly (especially for the Black Friday shoppers) in order to grab a quick bite at the Thanksgiving table.

And then the December frenzy descends and we drown in all things twinkly until the last of the after-Christmas sales rings up. We barely give a thought to the slow and steady progress of an earth leaning towards the cold and the dark. We're too busy to pay attention . . . and sometimes too tired to care.

The seasonal interplay of light and dark, summer and winter - what an age-old game of tag. The sun chases the moon for half the year. And then, in an instant, the celestial bodies flip flop and the moon takes off after the sun. Happens every year, the poet Mary Oliver claims. Every year, she says, we have been witness to it: how the world descends into a rich mash, in order that it may resume. The natural kinship of light and dark shines normal. The choreography of summer and winter dances in measured time to the laws of the universe. Too bad we're too busy (or too tired) to notice.

Until now. Now the bloom is long off the roses. Now the stores sit denuded of all things festive. And now, when the only tidings of great joy come from the credit card companies - the minimum is due. Now is the time to really feel the pinch of winter . . . the penalty of overspending. No wonder we're so depressed this time of year.

But, as the Director of Group Affairs for the Federation of Christian Ministries, I tell you that now is also the perfect time to pull in and to take stock - to find a place by the fire and to start and uncover the real desires in our new year's deck of cards. What dreams do we have to seed in 2016? What projects need a breath of fresh air in the year ahead? What ministries would do with an extra dose of Miracle Gro about now?

So . . . if you have a vision in your heart that you want to plant in the neighborhood . . . Or a faith community that needs an extra boost of energy . . . Or a community group in dire need of nourishment . . . let me know. In the coming months I will be looking at our group ministries and their Seed It - Need It - Feed It details - not only to support them with fellowship and with prayer but also to determine just how FCM can contribute to the vital ministries of our growing denomination.

Let's hunker down for the winter together, shall we? And keep our face to the rising sun. And listen to what we want to do and how we need to do it. And let me know. Together we can chase the blues away.

**Happy New Year!**

4

### "Lines Written in the Days of Growing Darkness" by Mary Oliver

Every year we have been  
witness to it: how the  
world descends

into a rich mash, in order that  
it may resume.  
And therefore  
who would cry out

to the petals on the ground  
to stay,  
knowing as we must,  
how the vivacity of what was is married

to the vitality of what will be?  
I don't say  
it's easy, but  
what else will do

if the love one claims to have for the world  
be true?

So let us go on, cheerfully enough,  
this and every crisping day,

though the sun be swinging east,  
and the ponds be cold and black,  
and the sweets of the year be doomed.



FCM Group Members

# Federation of Christian Ministries

Newsletter...VOL. 50 NO. 1 January/February - 2016



## Denominational Concerns

Chairperson -Eileen McCafferty DiFranco

### A Lifeline for Closing Parishes

In November, FCM President **Tom Cusack** and I did a presentation at this year's **Call To Action** convention entitled, "**How To Keep Your Parish Alive When Your Bishop Declares It Dead.**" For those of you who may not know, **Call to Action** is a Roman Catholic reform group founded in the 1970's that meets yearly and provides a milieu for Vatican II Catholics to discuss and promote improvements and modifications to current church policy. We felt that our presentation was timely in that many Catholics live in cities that have been subjected to massive parish closures due to both the cost of the sexual abuse scandal and the ongoing celibate male priest deficit.

These massive and ongoing closures have thrown entire communities into crisis. The fallout has not been either good or helpful. Research has indicated that increasing numbers of Catholics cease to attend Mass once their parish is shut down by a bishop who refuses to listen to alternative plans offered by the laity. Tom and I thought FCM could help these hurting communities figure out ways to stay alive, in spite of the bishop's edict.

Our plan to keep parishes alive is deceptively simple. There are a significant number of priests available, albeit not the male celibate kind and there are places in Protestant churches, synagogues, nursing homes, auditoriums, and people's homes where a congregation can continue to worship together as a resurrected parish. FCM hopes to provide the leadership to put these three entities together.

Our presentation contained both the theology and the structure that could help parishes to remain open in a new and very different way. There is still much more work to do, and we need a list of volunteers who would be willing to serve as mentors/presiders/consultants to concerned parishioners who are open to worshipping in a new manner. Aid from FCM could run the gamut from phone consultation, organization visits and/or presiding and preaching.

Are you willing to serve in any of the above mentioned capacities as we at FCM work together to rebuild a church that hierarchical fear, lack of faith, and impaired vision is slowly but surely dismantling?

More to follow...



# Federation of Christian Ministries

Newsletter...VOL. 50 NO. 1 January/February - 2016



## FCM Members Participate in Nicaragua Mission

by Anthony Ercolano, Commissioning Chair

"Don't give Juan your watch, and don't let Omar bite you." Thus began Director Julia Estela Castillo Bryan's orientation for the third annual Mission of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Church (OLBS), Bayside, New York to the Mustard Seed Communities of Nicaragua

Fifteen missionaries, under the guidance of FCM member **Margaret Brower**, arrived in Nicaragua on Saturday, November 7. Each member of the team had paid his or her own airfare and the Team had raised more than \$49,000 for the Mission. Brower had explained to the Team that many of the children had to beg in the streets to support themselves prior to being welcomed by the Mustard Seed Community. Our fundraising efforts helped us to understand what it is to beg.

The Team and their luggage, containing collected medicine, toiletries, clothing, and other needed supplies, were transported to the Mission House in Diriamba, where the missionaries would spend the week. The group consisted of parishioners, as well as their friends and acquaintances, all brought together by a desire to serve the abandoned, developmentally disabled infants, children and young adults who have been entrusted to Mustard Seed for care.

The remainder of Saturday was spent acclimating to the Mission House and getting to know the children. Each of the 40 children has his or her unique physical and mental issues, but they share a typical child's need for unlimited love and attention. And the missionaries supplied that in abundance.

**On Sunday**, the Team accompanied the children to the Church of San José in town, where the pastor was joined by Father Mark Matthias, parochial vicar of OLBS, in leading the congregation in a spirited liturgy. This was followed by a leisurely walk to the town center, a visit to the Basilica of San Sebastiano, and a bus ride back to the Mission House where inventory of the donations began

That evening, Julia surprised and honored the group by inviting them to be godparents for the children who had been prepared for Baptism and First Communion. She proposed a lottery to determine who would be each child's padrino or madrina on Friday. Over the next few days, they joined the children in their morning reflections as they prepared for this important step.

**On Monday**, the Team gathered for liturgy in the beautiful sunlit chapel on the site of the residence. This was followed by quiet reflection, breakfast, and a bus ride to the other Mustard Seed site in Managua. Hogar Belén Managua is the residence for the younger and, in many cases, more severely disabled children. After delivering the collected supplies to this home, the Team visited with the children in their dorms, fed them in their dining room, and accompanied them to the park for fresh air and rides in their wheel chairs.

The following two days were spent completing work projects at Diriamba. Half the group was assigned to creating a protective wall consisting of 80 pound cement blocks around the base of three trees. The others were asked to paint the exterior and interior of one of the girls' homes. Both tasks were completed by the middle of the second day. On Wednesday afternoon, the Team visited the Sewing Center – a project of Mustard Seed Communities – that offers an intensive course in sewing that culminates in a graduation ceremony and the presentation of a new sewing machine to each graduate to help make them more self-sufficient. Classes in baking and English are also provided.

**On Thursday** morning, those who submitted their names for the lottery were introduced to the child they would sponsor. The remainder of the day was spent exploring the beautiful sights and meeting the affable people of Nicaragua.

As the journey began, the driver and tour guide, Fernando Bosques Flores, displayed his vast knowledge and love of the country, helping especially the newcomers to more deeply appreciate the history, land and people of Nicaragua. Lunch at La Abuela's, a lagoon-side restaurant, was accompanied by swimming and relaxing in the hazy sun. The evening meal was taken in a lovely eatery in Grenada. Perhaps the highlight of the day was the twilight boat ride on Lake Managua, during which Lucy and her daughter – two monkeys – jumped on board to eat offered tomatoes and melon slices.



## FCM Newsletter...VOL. 50 NO. 1 January/February - 2016

Nicaragua Mission cont'd



**Friday** was the day of the children's first sacraments. The local pastor and an associate presided at the liturgy, accompanied by Fr. Mark and assisted by OLBS Deacon Bill Molloy. The children, dressed in white, were received into the Church with water, oil, song, tears and laughter. The other children were all dressed in new, donated clothing that had been brought by the missionaries.

The liturgy was followed by a feast of barbecued meats, vegetables and cake. Then came a fiesta provided by the Mission Team that lasted the rest of the day, with music, dancing, and several piñatas in the Recreation Center. During breaks in the party, Team members played soccer with the children on the lawn or walked quietly with them, holding their hands. It was clear their time together was coming to an end.

On **Saturday** morning, the group awoke early for their final mass and, following breakfast, many bid a tearful good-bye to the children and staff. Several members of the Team are already looking forward to next year. They miss the blackouts, rice and beans. But mostly, they miss the children.

Julia taught them that the only two things you can give to God are your love and your time. It was an honor to give them both to His children.

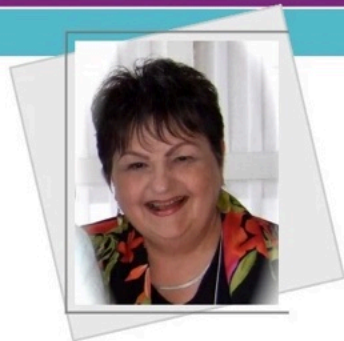
Mustard Seed Communities (MSC) is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to caring for the most vulnerable populations in society. It was founded by Msgr. Gregory Ramkissoon in 1978 as a home for children with disabilities on the outskirts of Kingston, Jamaica, and has since expanded and built additional facilities in Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic and Zimbabwe. The majority of its programs are dedicated to the care of children with serious physical and mental disabilities such as Down syndrome, hydrocephalus, cerebral palsy and muscular dystrophy. They also care for children affected by HIV/AIDS in Jamaica and Zimbabwe. In Jamaica, they have a home for teenage mothers and their babies. Its vision for each apostolate is to create a loving and caring environment to aid in the physical, mental and spiritual development of its residents.

MSC is also involved in numerous outreach and community development initiatives in the countries where they serve. They employ over 300 local workers, offering jobs, training and economic viability to people who would otherwise have no opportunity to break out of the cycle of poverty. MSC strives to introduce skills into the community and to empower its people. They are working towards helping their apostolates become fully self-sufficient through sustainable agriculture. Their hope is that this will improve the quality of life for their residents while fostering a sense of responsibility within the local community.



# Federation of Christian Ministries

Newsletter...VOL. 50 NO. 1 January/February - 2016



## FCM Communications

by Antoinette Marold, FCM Communications

### FCM Member Ministries Listed on the FCM Website

#### Ministry Listing

It's time to renew your FCM membership for 2016...that means it is also time to add or renew your Ministry Listing on the FCM Website!

One of the benefits of your FCM membership is to have a listing of the ministry services that you offer to the public. **Please Note:** You must request this listing and it must be renewed each year when you renew your membership.

Instructions for a Ministry Listing on the FCM website are under the "Find a Minister" drop down

Login to the Members area of the FCM website. Click on Ministry Listing and complete the form. Click Submit....

You can request a listing under three (3) categories. If you are requesting a listing under Weddings, you must be commissioned by FCM.

New and renewed listings are posted February 2016 and will remain for the 2016 calendar year.

#### FCM Newsletter

PLEASE NOTE: The most recent FCM Newsletter will be posted on the FCM website available for public viewing, starting **January 1, 2016**. Past Newsletters will be posted in the Members Only area of the website.

.Email: [communication@FCMmail.org](mailto:communication@FCMmail.org)



# Federation of Christian Ministries

Newsletter...VOL. 50 NO. 1 January/February - 2016



## Planning for 2016 Assembly Cause for Gratitude

by Patty & Tom Stricker

As co-chairs of the 2016 National Assembly planning committee, we look back on 2015 with much gratefulness for all our colleagues who have been using their talents to develop a first-class event. Their hard work has resulted in wonderful array of talented presenters who will offer their ideas within a well-organized schedule.

Consider our nationally-known main speakers: attendees will have the opportunity to hear [Bishop John Shelby Spong](#) not once but twice. [Marianne Duddy-Burke](#), Executive Director of Dignity USA and [Rev. John C. Dorhauer](#), General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ will also have much to offer. What an opportunity for FCM members to share in such knowledge, experience and wisdom all in one weekend.

Speaking of sharing knowledge, experience and wisdom, we are also grateful for our presenters who will offer workshops on topics as varied as Small Faith Communities, Native American Spirituality, Prayer in the 21st Century, and Contemporary Christianity as well as two sessions for chaplains, one for ministry within the Latino Community and one concerning patients and suicide.

Titled [With Open Arms](#), your 2016 Assembly will take place in Cleveland, Ohio, August 5-7. Remember: early registrations mean a [reduced conference price](#) so take advantage of the opportunity and sign up soon.

May 2016 be filled with peace for you even in times of turmoil.



**SAVE THE DATES.....AUGUST 5-7, 2016**

**FCM 2016 ASSEMBLY**

*With Open Arms*

**Sheraton Cleveland Airport Hotel...Cleveland, Ohio**

# FEDERATION OF CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

MARK YOUR CALENDARS....

## SAVE THE DATES

### AUGUST 5-7, 2016

### FCM 2016 NATIONAL ASSEMBLY



## *With Open Arms*

### Keynote Speaker

*Saturday, Morning & Afternoon*

### Bishop John Shelby Spong



**Friday Keynote Speaker**  
**Marianne Duddy-Burke**  
*Executive Director, DignityUSA*



**Saturday Afternoon Keynote Speaker**  
**Rev. John C. Dorhauer**  
*General Minister and President of UCC*



## Sheraton Cleveland Airport Hotel...Cleveland, Ohio



# The Federation of Christian Ministries

2016 Assembly - August 5-7, 2016

Sheraton Cleveland Airport Hotel...Cleveland, Ohio

*With Open Arms*

2016 Assembly Program Quick Look

Registration 12:00 Noon. until 7:00 p.m.



Friday, August 5, 2016 - Assembly Workshops.....4:00 p.m.

Ministering to the Hispanic Community.....Presenter: Salvador Leavitt-Alcantara, FCM - Chaplain

Small Faith Communities... Presenter: Rebecca Cartus, FCM

Prayer in the 21st. Century... Presenter: John Polanski, FCM

**Dinner 5:30p.m. (Optional) \$38.00 per person....prepaid reservations**

Friday Evening: 7:00 p.m. - Assembly Welcome

7:15 p.m. Keynote: Marianne Duddy-Burke...Executive Director, DignityUSA

Welcoming All: Ministers and Ministry that Respond to Human Needs and Can Save the Church

8:30 p.m. hors d'oeuvres with Cash Bar.....

Saturday, August 6, 2015

7:00 a.m. Morning Prayer

8:00 a.m. Breakfast

9:00 a.m. Keynote: *With Open Arms*..... Bishop John Shelby Spong

10:30 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. Workshops

When Mental Illness and Suicide Hit Home.....Tom and Fran Smith

Unwelcome at the Table...A Blessing in Disguise.....Jean and Mike Conley

Native American Spirituality.....Sr. Diane Pinchot OSU and Christopher Reynolds

Lunch 12:00 noon -1:00 p.m.

1:00 - 2:30 p.m. *With Open Arms*...Bishop John Shelby Spong

3:00 - 5:00 p.m. Unfinished Business of Civil Rights in America.....Rev. John C Dorhauer

5:30 pm - Cash Bar

6:15p.m. Dinner \*\*\* Presentation of Soto Award

7:30 p.m. Prayer Service - Commissioning & Endorsement Ceremonies

8:30 p.m. - Celebration Reception

Sunday, August 7, 2016

8:00 a.m. Morning Prayer....

Breakfast 8:30 a.m.

FCM Members Biennial Meeting - Sit with your Region

11:00 a.m. Assembly Ends



# With Open Arms

The Federation of Christian Ministries  
 2016 Assembly... August 5-7, 2016  
 Sheraton Cleveland Airport Hotel... Cleveland, Ohio



## Assembly Registration

Registration Deadline July 25, 2016

- Registration \$215 before March 1...\$235 before May 1...\$260 before July 1...\$280 after July 1 .  
 meals included except for Friday Dinner which is optional

Friday dinner (optional) \$38.00 due by July 25, 2016

- Friday Only - Workshops, Keynote, and hors d'oeuvres with Marianne Duddy-Burke  
 Registration: \$75.00 before July 1...\$85.00 after July 1, 2016
- Saturday Only (9:00 a.m - 5:00 p.m.) includes Lunch..Registration: \$150 before July 1...\$170 after July 1, 2016
- Friday & Saturday 9:00 a.m - 5:00 p.m. includes Lunch..Registration: \$225.00 before July 1...\$250. after July 1, 2016

CANCELLATIONS MUST BE MADE IN WRITING BY JUNE 15....\$25. CANCELLATION FEE (QUINNEMS@AOL.COM)

Registration Fees are listed above: (Please PRINT and use a separate form for each person attending)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration for the Assembly August 5-7, 2016 includes meals (see amount by date above)..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Optional Friday Dinner - \$38.00..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Friday Only Workshops, Keynote, and hors d'oeuvres with Marianne Duddy-Burke.....\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday Only (9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.) includes Lunch.....\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Friday & Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. includes Lunch .....\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Special Dietary Needs... TOTAL DUE \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Vegan \_\_\_\_\_ Gluten Free \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

A list of participants with their email addresses will be distributed at the Assembly. If you do not want your information shared please check box.

Registrations can be made and paid for ONLINE at [www.federationofchristianministries.org](http://www.federationofchristianministries.org)  
 or download the form and send with a check made out to FCM to Michaelita Quinn - 93 Post Rd. - Danbury, CT 06810

## Hotel Reservations

Sheraton Cleveland Airport Hotel - 5300 Riverside Drive - Cleveland OH 44135

- Room Rate: \$95. plus tax per room per night...rate in effect 3 days prior and 3 days after Assembly  
 Reservations must be made by **July 18, 2016** by calling the hotel directly **216-267-1500**  
 Free airport shuttle...free parking...free wireless high speed Internet...indoor pool...fitness center...



Continuing Education Credits applied for...

Additional Registration information: [Quinnems@aol.com](mailto:Quinnems@aol.com)



# The Federation of Christian Ministries

## Be a Sponsor for the 2016 Assembly

Sponsor or memorial name will be printed in the program.

**Donations will be used to help fund the Assembly**

Platinum...Donation of \$500. or more..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Gold...Donation of \$250. or more.....\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Silver...Donation of \$100. or more.....\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Bronze...Donation of \$25. or more.....\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Donations are tax deductible and can be made on the FCM website  
at [www.federationofchristianministries.org](http://www.federationofchristianministries.org) in the **ONLINE PAYMENT CENTER**

Donate under Assembly Donations. Thank you.

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Additional Questions...Please contact Patty Stricker [xavier9660@gmail.com](mailto:xavier9660@gmail.com)



# Federation of Christian Ministries

Newsletter...VOL. 50 NO. 1 January/February - 2016



## Regional News

**Northeast Region** Vice President...Dan Pellegrin

Richard Rohr has been called America's foremost Franciscan. Yet you probably never considered he has a connection with you and FCM.

It jumped out at me while I was reading his book, *Simplicity*. He wrote it in 1997 as he headed off to New Mexico where he founded a new center that has since flourished. (Learn more at [www.cac.org](http://www.cac.org)). Rohr writes, "Our main intention was to gather people who had a vision of service to the world, to train them and make them qualified for this work." A fine description of FCM: first, we have a vision of service to the world. Second, we learn from each other: at our national Assembly (now's a good time to sign up by the way!) as well as on the regional and local level. Finally, through commissioning and endorsement we become ever more qualified for our work.

He goes on to say that the community at his center is "a byproduct of people heading in the same direction." FCM again – that's what we are doing: heading together in the same direction. He then comments on the current situation in the Roman Catholic Church, noting that "...and now nobody is stronger than the sisters." This is because they have reciprocally educated one another in the process of heading in the same direction. FCM!

When he wrote, "We don't need pyramids; we need circles," I knew he must be writing about FCM. No pyramids for us – our Circle meets twice a year, next in February!

After a lifetime of community building, giving retreats, and training servants, Rohr writes, "The most important thing for us is to teach contemplative prayer." Our President **Tom Cusack** has stressed a short period of daily contemplative prayer (**2x2 4 FCM**). (Sources for it have been listed in our Newsletter, with more to follow.)

Attention Regional Members: Save Dates for Gatherings... All Northeast Region members should mark your calendars for the following: for the Framingham, MA area, please save Sunday afternoon, January 24. Thank you to **Jean Marchant**, **Ronald Hindelang**, and **Joyce McFadden** for hosting this event. For the Greater New York/southern Connecticut area, please save March 6 (Sunday afternoon) to gather in White Plains. **Carl Yusavitz** and Chaplain **Heidi Tierney** are planning the meeting for the Philadelphia area, with **Paul and Pat Stubenbort** pitching in. **Tom Cusack** is planning for the southern New Jersey area. Email details will follow. It is my personal goal to have local get-togethers for every geographical area not mentioned above by this spring, and I welcome any local volunteers to assist in this regard.

Area Representatives... Chaplain **Heidi Tierney** (Philadelphia) and **Mary Ann Cejka** (Westchester/Putnam) have graciously agreed to serve as Area Representatives, providing additional assistance to members within their local area. Please note: this does not mean more paperwork! Area reps are a recent volunteer addition to FCM regional staffing so consider joining them to help address member concerns.

New Candidates for Commissioning... Our region continues to give witness to the growth of FCM in its five candidates for commissioning this February! Watch for more information about these members in the next issue.





# Federation of Christian Ministries

Newsletter...VOL. 50 NO. 1 January/February - 2016

## Regional News

**Southern Region** by Vice President...Sally T. Sherry



### A Prayer for Peace and Justice

This essay will start off with a conclusion. It seems projecting the light of our being into the world in daily prayer may be, at times, the only helpful outcome for peace and justice. Think for a moment about the way a Greek Tragedy unfolds. It begins with Satiety: too much of anything; power, money, beauty, intelligence. People then become taken in by Delusion: they are correct and will listen to nobody. Hubris: arrogance and self-righteousness and grandiosity become extreme. Finally, Nemesis is identified as a source of harm or ruin, the goddess of retributive justice or vengeance.

Will we ever learn? In his book I Don't Believe Atheists, Chris Hedges asks why a teleological utopian would even think we are progressing as a species, that evolution of the species is a utopianism of mass perpetuation and has no support in history. Hedges might even call it perverted idealism, and he certainly would remind us that life is not a linear coherent narrative. Prayer, introspection, visualization, and quiet may yield some answers.

An example of such an answer was found recently in the actions a group of FCM members and others who were marching around downtown Cleveland with signs against the pre-emptive war in Iraq. Sadly, the tragedy was already unfolding. There was plenty of satiety -- too much money and too much power in Washington. Delusion abounded: "We will be liberators and welcomed with open arms, and there is plenty of oil to be had!" Hubris? We can all answer that one, too. And finally, Nemesis: we all know now that bombing Iraq was a window into our own savagery and atrocities.

Sigmund Freud thought society was very fragile indeed and feared these urges as he states in his book Civilization and Its Discontents. Violence as an instrument of change brings even more violence. Iraq's nemesis is that it is now in a state of anarchy and ISIS is on the move. Daily we see choices that are not for the common good, but rather for maximum profit that results in environmental decay. Corporate America rewrites the tragedy all over again.

So was all that marching wasted? No, and the answer seems to be daily prayer for peace and justice, not just a wishing and verbalizing but a deep, internal prayer for light and love in the universe. A prayer that hurts because it is so strong. A prayer with vitality and life force and energy.

*As T.S. Elliot urges us:  
"I said to my soul, be still and wait without hope  
For hope would be hope for the wrong thing;  
wait without love  
For love would be love of the wrong thing;  
there is yet faith But the faith and the love  
and the hope are all in the waiting.  
Wait without thought, for you are not ready  
for thought:  
So the darkness shall be the light, and the  
stillness the dancing.*

Finally a wish for you for 2016 from the Persian poet Hafez:

Now is the time  
Now is the time to know  
That all that you do is sacred  
Now, why not consider  
A lasting truce with yourself and God?  
Now is the time to understand  
That all your ideas of right and wrong  
Were just a child's training wheels  
To be laid aside  
When you can finally live  
With veracity and love.  
Now is the time for the world to know  
That every thought and action is sacred.  
That this is the time  
For you to compute the impossibility  
That there is anything  
But Grace.  
Now is the season to know  
That everything you do  
Is Sacred.

# Federation of Christian Ministries

Newsletter...VOL. 50 NO. 1 January/February - 2016



## Regional News

**Great Lakes Region** Co-Vice Presidents  
Ron Davis & Amy Simpson Bennethum

Perhaps the greatest thing that I delight in about January is that it is a new beginning. I often begin the year reflecting on accomplishments made in the passing year. Then, I look forward with anticipation of the things that I would like to do well in the new year. It causes me to be mindful that I can begin the year with new intentions to follow God with renewed faithfulness and zeal.

One growth area that we are working on in the Great Lakes Region is to deepen our relationships one with another. I am excited that efforts are being made in states throughout the region to encourage members to come together for sharing and fellowship. For example, a group in Louisville, Kentucky will gather on January 9<sup>th</sup> for a three-hour meeting. That same day, other members will travel to Columbus, Ohio to gather at my home for a prayer meeting at 11:00 a.m. followed by a fellowship meal. Building a stronger community where we can network, care for, and simply laugh together is very important to us. May God bless this growth area in 2016.

Throughout this new year events will be planned with these purposes in mind. If you are one who would like to host an event in your area, have ideas about what we should strive to do, feel free to let Amy or me know your thoughts. Moreover, if you are going to be ordained in your city in 2016, Amy and I would love to be there to offer you encouragement and support. Please let us know this in a timely manner so that one or both of us can schedule the trip. Know that all are welcomed to pop in and visit with us at one of our local gatherings. If you are interested in receiving more information such as addresses and directions to our regional events, email me at: [greatlakesvp@FCMmail.org](mailto:greatlakesvp@FCMmail.org).

Elsewhere in this newsletter is an article about **Rafael Macaranas** and how he was honored in 2015. We are proud of him and applaud him for his accomplishment. When you achieve ministry milestones, please share the news with us so that we can pass it on to the FCM community. It is always a delight and joy to see how God is using our members to make a difference in this world.

One more thing: as you move out in 2016, keep your eyes and ears open as you visit with ministry friends in your area. You might find yourself in a conversation with a minister who is looking for a denomination for endorsement or to be commissioned. If you find yourself in touch with such a person, please offer the name and phone number to the Vice President in your region. We would be more than happy to follow up on your leads.



## FCM Member Cited as Example of Compassion

*(Editor's note: Thanks to Great Lakes VPs **Ron Davis** and **Amy Simpson-Bennethum** as well as honoree **Rafael Macaranas** for providing the information about this tribute. Congratulations to Rafael and best wishes for his continued ministry!)*

Great Lakes region member **Rafael Macaranas** doesn't have to do much talking about himself because his actions speak volumes, particularly with regard to compassion. So when his colleagues were looking for someone to recognize for the personification of that virtue, they knew just where to turn.

A staff member since 2002 of Hosparus, a not-for-profit hospice care provider in Kentucky and southern Indiana, Rafael was recognized for his efforts at the 10th Candle Glow Gala held at the Marriott Downtown in Louisville, Kentucky on November 14.

He received the Dr. Joe Rotella Compassion Award, a newly-created honor bestowed by Hosparus on a care provider who exemplifies compassion through extraordinary patient care, support or advocacy. The award citation notes that "...he has provided outstanding spiritual counseling and guidance for thousands of our patients and their family members."

Rafael moved to Louisville from New York City in chaotic post-9/11 America and put his skills to work in the inpatient care center at Hosparus. He now serves as a nursing home chaplain where the citation describes him as "humbled by his calling to provide patients with serenity and comfort as they journey toward a peaceful transition."

A colleague explains how he "exemplifies the essence of compassion in everything he does... He goes to great lengths to be available to assist and makes everyone feel that they are the most important person in his life."

An immigrant from the Philippines in the early 90's, Rafael knows first-hand how compassion transcends continents and races and is grateful for the opportunity to serve all patients without regard for orientation, faith or background.

He also appreciates the support he has known from FCM since becoming a member and later receiving endorsement, stating that he has grown in compassion through his years of participation. He was joined at the event by his wife Karen and daughter Irina as well as FCM members **Bob Mueller**, **Tony Heitzman** and **Bill Bohnert**. Looking back, Rafael recalls happily, "Yes it was a blessed memorable evening!"



# Federation of Christian Ministries

Newsletter...VOL. 50 NO. 1 January/February - 2016

## Regional News

**Mountains & Plains Region** by Vice President...Richard James



As we enter the new year, I would like to remind the Mountain and Planes Region that the FCM Circle is enlisting local area representatives, and encouraging local FCM gatherings in order to enrich our community experience. My hope is to encourage those who are interested in becoming a local area representative and/or hosting a local FCM gathering to contact me via e-mail: [mts\\_plainsvp@FCMmail.org](mailto:mts_plainsvp@FCMmail.org).

As you know, last October the Mountain and Planes Region held its regional retreat gathering at Lake Williamson Christian Conference Center in Carlinville, IL. In attendance were about twenty-five FCM members and several visitors. An insight I took away from that event was the need we have as members of FCM to identify our sense of ministry and the way we benefit from sharing how the call to discipleship is manifested in our ministry. I encourage you to submit your reflections so they can be included in the Newsletter.

On November 1, 2015, several Chicago Area FCM members attended a wonderful worship experience celebrating Rev. **Barbara Zeman's** seventh anniversary as a priest. The worship service was hosted by the faith community of Dignity in Chicago. **Please enjoy our first Reflection on Ministry from Barbara.**

AS I REFLECT BACK OVER THE PAST SEVEN YEARS I REALIZE THAT I AM JUST WHERE I AM SUPPOSED TO BE. HAD I NOT CHOSEN THIS PATH, MY LIFE WOULD HAVE BEEN DRASTICALLY DIFFERENT. THE PATH I CHOSE, TO LET THE DIVINE SOURCE GUIDE ME EVERY MOMENT OF EVERY DAY, HAS NOT BEEN AN EASY FIT.

MANY LOVED ONES ARE NOW IN THE HANDS OF OUR MAKER. MUCH UPHEAVAL HAS GIVEN WAY TO DRASTIC TRANSFORMATION (EVEN DOWN TO MY NEW HIP AND NEW HAIR COLOR – SILVER). THROUGH IT ALL, MY DEDICATION TO SPIRIT HAS HELPED ME DISCOVER THE PEACE AND JOY DEEP WITHIN MY SOUL.

SEVEN YEARS AGO, AS I PROFESSED THAT "I AM READY" TO ENTER INTO THE PRIESTHOOD, I HAD NO IDEA HOW GOD WOULD LEAD ME INTO MINISTRY. I WAS THE FIRST WOMAN TO BE ORDAINED TO THE ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIESTHOOD IN CHICAGO. HUNDREDS WERE THERE TO WITNESS. LITTLE DID ANY OF US KNOW HOW EACH OF OUR LIVES WOULD CONTINUE TO INTERSECT.

I BEGAN SLOWLY, CELEBRATING EUCHARIST IN MY HOME AND THE HOMES OF FRIENDS. AS A CONTRACT CHAPLAIN I NEVER KNEW WHERE OR WHEN THE SPIRIT WOULD GIVE ME OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE. BUT I ALWAYS KNEW THAT WHENEVER I ENCOUNTERED FEAR AND TREMBLING I COULD STAND BESIDE IT AND HELP THOSE WHO WERE HELPLESS BY JUST REMAINING PRESENT.



Rev. Barbara Zeman celebrated her 7th anniversary as a Priest on November 1, 2015 at Dignity Chicago. The congregation shares space with Broadway United Methodist located at 3338 N. Broadway, Chicago, IL.

GRADUALLY I FOUND MY FOOTING. I ALSO FOUND DIGNITY CHICAGO. I STRUGGLED TO REALIZE A VISION OF A REAL PARISH, BUT THAT DIDN'T SEEM TO HOLD TOGETHER. WHAT DID HOLD IS A GROWING REALIZATION THAT GOD APPEARS IN THE SILENCE, WHEN WE LEAST EXPECT. IN THAT SILENCE WE WITHSTAND THE DARKNESS OF TRAILS AND CHALLENGES TOGETHER.

TODAY I STILL CELEBRATE EUCHARIST WITH DIGNITY CHICAGO AND STAND WITH THE COMMUNITY AS A SPIRITUAL SUPPORT. THEY HAVE BECOME MY STRONGHOLD AND BASE ... MY FAMILY. I OFFICIATE AT COUNTLESS WEDDINGS, FUNERALS AND BAPTISMS AND AM BUILDING AN INTERFAITH COMMUNITY WITH AN ORTHODOX RABBI. STILL A CONTRACT CHAPLAIN, I AM NOW AN INDEPENDENT LIVING DONOR ADVOCATE FOR NORTHWESTERN MEMORIAL HOSPITAL'S TRANSPLANT DEPARTMENT.

I MEET THE DIVINE EVERY DAY IN THE EYES OF EVERYONE I ENCOUNTER, IN THE HEARTS OF ALL WHO ARE OPEN AND IN THE SPIRIT OF ALL WHO REALIZE THAT WE ARE ONE. I STAND BEFORE THE DIVINE EVEN, AND ESPECIALLY, ON THE BUS AS I JOURNEY TO WORK THROUGH THREE DIFFERENT GANG TERRITORIES AND INTO A CITY PULSING WITH ANXIETY. I SEE GOD IN EACH FACE ... IN EVERY ENCOUNTER. MY LIFE IS 'PRIEST'.

AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM. MY GOD HAS DONE GREAT THINGS FOR ME. HOLY IS GOD'S NAME.

# Federation of Christian Ministries

Newsletter...VOL. 50 NO. 1 January/February - 2016

## Regional News

**Pacific Region** by Vice President....Donna Schrieber



Congratulations to **Heike Ward** who was commissioned on October 17th in Squim, Washington. Heike successfully completed coursework to be certified as law-enforcement chaplain currently holds that position with the police department.

We are inviting commissioned and endorsed members to participate in a gathering on Google Hangouts on January 11th. Our idea is to support each other and learn from each other in a very casual setting. I have met with Heike and **Melinda Andrew** on Google Hangout and it works well once you get the hang of it.

Hangout is a free service. You send out an invitation by email to whomever you wish. Let them know when the time is you want to meet and then go on Google Hangouts and "call" them. A smartphone or computer with a Skype capability is needed. We hope to see you there.



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### FCM CERTIFICATES

These lovely certificates are available from the FCM Central Office. Please specify your choice: Baptism, Marriage, Holy Union, and the number of certificates you need. Certificates are \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00. Each certificate is printed on certificate weight paper in blue ink; they carry the FCM logo and seal.

**FCM Website**

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