

New Leaders of the U.S. Secular Franciscan Order

Nov. 2009

Tom Bello, who was professed as a Secular Franciscan in 1983, has served the order at all levels. He was elected vice-minister of his local fraternity, St. Thomas More Fraternity in Arlington, Va., in 1986 and became minister in 1988 and again in 1992. He was a member of the Provincial Executive Council, Holy Land Province from 1988 until the province became a region. He then was elected to the regional council of St. Margaret of Cortona region and has served in numerous positions, including regional minister.

On the national fraternity, Tom has worked on the national statutes and up to this election, he served as national vice minister. He has worked as an ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) teacher for the past 21 years. He and his wife, Judy, have three children.

Vice minister Elaine Hedtke of Port Angeles, Wash, was minister of Troubadours of Peace Region. Hedtke, who was professed in 1965, has served the order at various levels. At her fraternity level, she has served as ecology commissions chair and formation director. She was regional commissioner for liturgy and regional vice-minister and minister.

Most of her career has been spent as a law enforcement officer. She has four adult married children.

Secretary Jan Parker of O'Fallon, Mo., and minister of St. Clare Region, was professed in 1988. Parker has served the order at several levels. She is a member of San Damiano Fraternity, where she served as formation director, secretary and minister. At the regional level, she has served both as minister and formation director. Parker is a full-time pastoral associate at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church and works in liturgy and music.

Treasurer Dennis Ross of Mentor, Ohio, is beginning his third term as national treasurer. He was professed in 1986. He also served as treasurer of the SFO province of St. Augustine from 1990 to 1996. On the regional level, he has been treasurer of St. Maximilian Kolbe Region from 1995 to 2001. He also served as minister from 2001 to 2003. At his local fraternity, Br. Jacopa, he was treasurer, vice minister, minister and newsletter publisher. He is a retired teacher. He and his wife, Lynn, of 39 years, have six children and seven grandchildren.

National Councilor Mary Bittner of Ypsilanti, Miss., is former minister of Divine Mercy Region. She had served as regional minister for six years. At her local fraternity of St. Joseph, she has been formation team member, secretary, minister, and councilor. At the regional level, she has also been vice minister and served on the regional formation team. She is a research assistant professor at University of Michigan Medical School in Ann Arbor, Mich.

National Councilor Michelle Kim, Ph.D., of Scarsdale, NY., was also elected substitute international councilor. She has served as formation director of the New York Korean Martyrs Fraternity. She was professed in 2005.

She is an adjunct professor at the State University of New York, Westchester Community College. She is involved with Franciscans International at the United Nations and is chair of the Eco-Spirituality Subcommittee, the NGO Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns, United Nations, N.Y. She is married to Stephen Kim and has one daughter, Clara.

National Councilor Arturo Villareal is from El Paso, Texas. He has served as vice minister of Empress of the Americas region and was professed in 1981. He is member of St. Patrick's Fraternity in El Paso. His wife, Sofia, is a Secular Franciscan. They have two daughters and a son, Diana, Natalie and Ben.

International Councilor Anne Mulqueen of Baltimore is in her second term. She has served as spiritual assistant to Padre Pio Fraternity in Maryland, is a member of the Joint Committee on Franciscan Unity, a secretary of the Duns Scotus Formation Trust Fund, a contributor to the forthcoming Formation Manual and a board member for the Institute for Contemporary Franciscan Life based at St. Francis University in Loretto, Pa. She is married to Bill Mulqueen and has two daughters, Peggy and Nan, and two grandchildren.