

THE NATIONAL FRATERNITY

of

THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER



Newsletter

Fall, 1992

LEADERSHIP - PUTTING ON THE MIND OF CHRIST

Richard Morton, SFO
National Minister

As members of the Secular Franciscan Order, we are expected to be leaders. For example, we are called by our Rule to: ". . . *individually and collectively be in the forefront in promoting justice by the testimony of their human lives and their courageous initiatives.*" (Rule, Par. 15). This is a very direct call to leadership.

For most of us, an adequate response to this particular invitation or to the others included in the Rule, means that we will be different, we will change. Franciscans realize it is only in being changed ourselves, that we will be instrumental in changing our environment.

Change! A word that is both challenging and yet disturbing. Each of us is challenged to grow and mature into a complete person. In so doing, we know we are venturing into unexplored territory. Journeys of this nature usually cause stress because of the uncertainty of what lies ahead. One way to help cope with the situation is to: "*Put on the mind of Christ.*"

Jesus and Change

What do we mean when we consider the thought to "put on the mind of Christ"? What is the mind of Christ and how should we put it on? What mindset should we put on? Should we put on the mind of Christ as the humble carpenter, the suffering servant, the good shepherd, the proclaimer of the Beatitudes, etc.?

When we analyze these different mindsets, we find a common thread: Jesus was involved in change. He was the master change agent of his day. Jesus started dealing with change early in life. As the son of a carpenter, he helped to change ordinary wood into something useful. Later, as the Good Shepherd, he looked after the lost and invited them to a change of heart. In the Beatitudes, he provides a model life style and asks his followers to change their hearts to match. As the suffering servant, he offered his life on the cross so that we could become daughters and sons of God.

Referring to scripture:

"Just then the disciples came up to Jesus with the question, 'who is of greatest impor-

tance in the kingdom of God?' He called a little child over and stood him in their midst and said: 'I assure you, unless you change and become like little children, you will not enter the kingdom of God. Whoever makes himself lowly, becoming like this child, is of greatest importance in that heavenly reign.'

(New American Bible: Mt, 18:1-4)

I have come not to invite the self-righteous to a change of heart, but sinners. (Lk, 5:32)

Now change of this sort does not come easily, without pain or adverse consequences. With change comes division, the separation of the old from the new, the going from the comfortable to the uncomfortable, the moving from the known to the unknown.

In the acts of the apostles, during the trial of Stephen, false witnesses said: "We have heard him [Stephen] claim that Jesus the Nazorean will destroy this place and change the customs which Moses handed down to us." (Acts 6:14)

In the gospel of John, Jesus said: "I came into this world to divide it, to make the sightless see and the seeing blind." (Jn 9:39)

Francis and Change

After his resurrection, Jesus put the future of his "change movement" into the hands of his apostles. They, and a relatively few other followers, continued to preach and practice what Christ had taught them. Throughout the centuries, many followed in Jesus' footsteps, but none quite so closely as Francis Bernardone.

St. Francis was so recognized as the prime example of how to put on the mind of Christ that he is sometimes referred to as the "other Christ".

We are all familiar with the stories and the legends of how Francis changed and preached change by his example.

We know that without ever trying to do so, he attracted many followers who experienced change and were instrumental in changing others. Even the society of their day experienced change. Through the centuries, Franciscans everywhere, and of all persuasions, have continued this tradition.

The SFO and Change

"Putting on the mind of Christ" means we must accept the reality that, from now on, things must be different. The status quo is no longer acceptable. The continued living of our past behavior is not possible.

Jesus Christ, Son of the unchangeable Father, entered the world to change it, to redeem it. He came to fulfill the old covenant and establish a new covenant. His coming opened a future for the human race that was previously unattainable. He called the women and men of his day to a change of heart, to move from their old ways of thinking and behaving to a new way. The message Jesus gave his contemporaries is given to us today: to gain access to the promised future, we must change and become a different people. Jesus spent a good share of his time on earth teaching this. Today, he continues to call us to change and gently beckons us to heed his invitation.

So here we are in the fall of 1992. You may be asking yourselves, "So what? Where is all this leading? What does all this have to do with me?"

I suggest that it has everything to do with each of us! As Secular Franciscans, we are leaders, servant leaders. We must put on the mind of Christ particularly now in this time

of chaos and of a rapidly altering society. We must be agents of change starting with ourselves and our spiritual lives and then letting this overflow into our thoughts and actions, into every aspect of our secular lives and into our Order.

As we consider the subject of change, why not include our own Order? Why not consider how we can become agents of change inside the Secular Franciscan Order so the Order can be stronger, more vibrant, and be better able to support us in our quest to renew ourselves so this renewal will overflow into the world around us.

Let me make a few suggestions.

1. We must understand the vision of what the Order should be and can be.

2. We must be able to articulate that vision. Doing this, allows others to accompany us on the shared journey.

3. We must have the courage to start the journey and to be persistent and patient as we travel along the path.

When we as individual Secular Franciscans, as members of Local, Regional/Provincial, and National Fraternities, put on the mind of Christ, we will of necessity be future oriented and agents of change. In whatever we do, we will have a vision of where we need to go and will not be afraid to work toward the attainment of that vision. We will place our trust in the hands of the Lord and pray for the wisdom of the Holy Spirit.

The world needs help; it is crying for change, for peace, for justice, for holiness. We are equipped with faith, with courage, with the prayerful support of our sisters and brothers. In other words, we have been given the gifts necessary to make change happen.

What are we waiting for? "Let us begin, for as yet we have done nothing." (St. Francis)



THE PERIPATETIC FRANCIS

Judy Major, SFO, of Eugene, Oregon, is shown holding two snap shots of her stolen statue of St. Francis. The abductors, who identified themselves as Chet and Winkie, took the concrete, 2½ foot statue from Judy's yard and on a cross-country ride in April. They were compassionate enough to send her pictures and notes en route. One of the above photos is of Francis beside historic monuments in Philadelphia. In late May, Frank, as his statue-nappers called him, was back in his yard - with a marked map on his shoulder. Judy has taken him inside until she can have him cemented to the bird bath.

ACTING MINISTERS OF EMERGING FRATERNITIES, PLEASE NOTE:

The Executive Council has approved the following: At this year's Annual Chapter, Oct. 21 to 24, acting ministers of emerging regions are invited to attend which means that in-house expenses (room and board, Wed-Sat noon) will be paid by NAFRA. You will receive notice from the National Secretary.

REGIONALIZATION: WHAT IS IT?

Lawrence Herbert, SFO, Newsletter Staff

Regionalization is one of the most important topics that the Secular Franciscan Order is facing in the 90's and is, frequently, the least understood. I think that the first question that needs to be addressed is why do we have to regionalize? You may say that the provincial structure of fraternity is working well enough, and *if it ain't broke, don't fix it*. I question both ideas, that the provincial level of fraternity is working well and that it isn't broken.

There are many Provinces that have fraternities in several states and those states may or may not be contiguous. The time, effort, and financial expenditures of the minister to perform a fraternal visitation increase with the distance travelled. If a minister were to travel from New England to the midwest on visitations the expenses would be a burden for a large province and all but prohibitive for a small province.

The friars also have to share in the expenditure of time, effort, and money. The provincial spiritual assistant has a great deal of travel involved in his position in addition to any responsibilities and ministries he may have in his friar province. Regionalization would enable the regional council to provide better services to the local fraternities through improved, enhanced management of time, talents, and tithes.

I am not advocating taking an iron bar to the potter's jar of provincial structure and smashing it. What I am suggesting is to take a closer look at the provincial structures that you do have and to acknowledge that there may be a better way of putting that structure together. That is the idea behind regionalization.

Perhaps you are now thinking that the provincial structure may not necessarily be the best, but on what authority do we change from a provincial structure to a regional structure?

The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order, Article 20, states: "*The Secular Franciscan Order is divided into fraternities on various levels - local, **regional**, national, and international.*" So, according to our Rule, our fraternities are to be affiliated on a regional basis. When we were professed we promised "*to live all the days of our life the Gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ in the Secular Franciscan Order by observing its rule of life.*"

The National Fraternity is committed to regionalization, and sooner or later all fraternities will have to be a part of a region. If you choose to wait for the inevitable you will have little or no input into the organization or structure of the region. You may well be told that your fraternity must be a part of this or that region. No one likes being told that they have to be a part of something they don't want and that they had no say in organizing.

The opportunity for you is now! Now you can have input into how the region will take shape.

I have been discussing regionalization and have not defined what regionalization is. If I were to survey all of the fraternities in the United States as to what regionalization means I would get slightly different answers from each fraternity. For the sake of this article I have a working definition of regionalization:

The *process* whereby local fraternities are *organized* on the basis of geographical considerations, common problems, and pastoral realities

(Consti. Art. 61) by representatives of the local fraternities working with authorized representatives from the provincial level of fraternity.

That is quite a mouthful and could arguably be altered to meet the specific requirements of individual regions. But let us see what all the different aspects of this definition mean and how they interrelate to one another.

First of all, regionalization is a *process*. A process is the course of continuing development involving many changes over the passage of time. A region will not be developed at one meeting of the fraternities involved. It will require a lot of hard work on the part of interested Seculars and a lot of honest, open communication among the fraternities within the proposed region. Each Secular should have the opportunity to participate in the process, directly or through a representative.

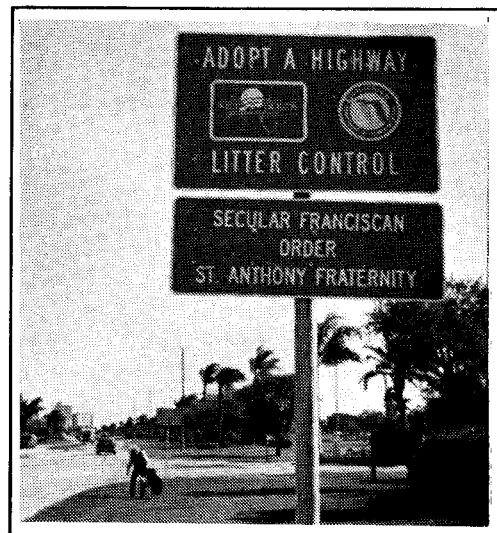
Inevitably there will be conflicts or misunderstandings that will have to be dealt with to the best of everyone's abilities. The process involves looking at the parts of the structures that you have now and adapting those structures to fit into the region. A possible analogy is that of a jig saw puzzle being put together by a committee when no one knows in advance what the completed picture will look like. Difficult? Yes. Challenging? Of course. Impossible? NO.

Second, is *organized*. To continue with the analogy of a jig saw puzzle, the parts of the puzzle may come from different puzzles and may have to be modified to fit into the new picture. It is not the direct transplanting of a single provincial structure into a region without any collaboration as to what, how, when, and why. Every provincial structure has its good points and others that could be better than they are. The challenge is to glean the best from what you have on the provincial level and to join it with the best that other provinces bring to the organization of the region.

Next we come to three criteria upon which the region should be based: geographical considerations, common problems, and pastoral realities. These criteria were not dreamed up by a cartographer, a social anthropologist, and a friar. They are necessary to define the boundaries of the region as determined by the individuals in the proposed region.

Geographical considerations may include such items as a mountain range that may separate fraternities that on a map may appear to be nearby. Other objects that may form borders of regions are rivers that are not bridged, interstate highways and state borders. Each of these poses a physical or psychological boundary for the individuals on both sides. Only the local individuals have the common knowledge of the area involved and that is precisely why much input from the local fraternities should be sought. *Cont. next issue.*

ECOLOGY IN ACTION



St. Anthony of Padua Fraternity, St. Petersburg, Florida, has adopted and patrols a highway.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I am writing this letter to express a belief that we, the Secular Franciscans, are being called to a deep commitment and a mission.

I am proud and filled with gratitude to our Lord for calling me to be a Secular Franciscan and I can think of no better way to live than in the *Imitation of Christ* through the gospel.

I believe that we have a great mission in our lives. We have within our hands a great means of bringing about radical changes, great conversions, an influx of vocations, and the ability to feed the hungry. We are called to unity and to experience the power of Prayer, Fasting, and Penance our Order was originally called to do.

This is a mission for everyone, no matter age, health, or location. We must turn to God in all matters, great or small.

It is with great hope that we will unite in a Common Prayer of Petition and Fasting every Wednesday for conversion and every Friday for Vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life; it may be fasting from food, drinks, smoking, curt remarks, impatience, anger, whatever we are capable of. Just imagine all Secular Franciscans bombarding Heaven with these requests. How could Our Lord Refuse!

Secondly, I suggest that in fulfillment of the request of Vatican II, as well as our own commitment to the Order, we are called to live the gospel life and to evangelize, and to share the gospel life openly.

It is said that if every Catholic evangelized one person, in 10 years there would be total conversion.

We can no longer assume that others will shoulder this responsibility. It is our responsibility as Secular Franciscans. We have been called by God to the Franciscan Order, not because we are special, but because God has given us this gift. We have only to look to St. Francis to know our own call to prayer and penance for others.

Can we meet this challenge? Can we be unafraid? If God is with us, who can be against us. I pray that the Holy Spirit allows you to perceive this in the way I have meant it. Peace be with you.

God Bless you,

Sandra McConnell, SFO
Capuchin Retreat
P.O. Box 188
Washington, MI 48094

THE LIABILITY DILEMMA

Dr. Sarah K. Ledoux, SFO
Minister, St. Casimir Province

A local parishioner sustains an injury on church property. The injury is not serious, but the injured party inquires about liability insurance. The inquiry is relayed to the chancery. The pastor, in turn, asks the local SFO minister, if the fraternity or the National has coverage for SFO members who meet at the church. If not, he says regretfully, the fraternity will have to meet elsewhere.

This is not a singular incident; the scenario is occurring in other parts of the country. Most local fraternities couldn't afford liability insurance; it is doubtful that many provinces or regions could. But it is a situation that needs to be addressed.

Information is being gathered for presentation at the Ministers' meeting this October.

I MET ST. FRANCIS AT THE QUINQUENNIAL CONGRESS

Rev. Stephen R. Gross, OFM Conv.
Conf. National Spiritual Assistants

I met St. Francis at the Quinquennial Congress! What an honor!! He was disguised (or was he?) in the persons of an AV/Video Professional, a driver of one of the transportation vans, and in a most gentle woman from Olpe, Kansas.

I knew it was St. Francis, because it wasn't what they did or said so much as how they called forth from me the recognition of my own desires to be one with them in the Spirit of Jesus.

While being who they were, their bright smiles, engaging conversation, and dedication to their assignments and so much more - all proclaimed boldly that they were about the work of contributing to the formation of the Church as Franciscan people!

They were so humbly complimentary of the beauty of the Franciscan Family around them. They shared their joys and sorrow with me and the Faith that was the foundation of their real lives.

There they were - small parts of the whole - in love with God and his servant Francis; there He was, loving and present in and among his sisters and brothers - all Jesus People.

These three Good People were living the reality of the challenge embraced in the words of the commissioning ceremony at the Congress' closing liturgy....no excuses were found in their lives....they were, in fact, FULLY ALIVE to me, WITH THE FULLNESS OF CHRIST!....and I want to be like them, in Francis, for Jesus, in the Church, for the world; and nothing can keep me from

that identity. Surely, Bob, Mary Lou, and Vince are the Lord's gift to me, along life's way, to encourage me toward the future!

Did you meet St. Francis at the Congress? I'll bet you did! How? Through whom? Look in the mirror and reflect: "AS THE FATHER SEES IN EVERY PERSON THE FEATURES OF HIS SON, THE FIRSTBORN OF MANY BROTHERS AND SISTERS, SO THE SECULAR FRANCISCANS WITH A GENTLE AND COURTEOUS SPIRIT ACCEPT ALL PEOPLE AS A GIFT OF THE LORD AND AN IMAGE OF CHRIST". (Rule #13.1)

If one St. Francis could begin to change the world of his time, these three Good people have been more than a convincing proof of just how desirous the Lord is to grace His world through the instrumentality of three Good people whose lives touched mine so profoundly and, who like all of us, will do so much to speak of His love for all people through our Franciscan hearts..."Set yourselves free to love God and your brothers and sisters!" (Rule #12)

Let the world around you experience your humble belief that the Lord is present to them through you for their heartfelt needs. BELIEVE AND ACT UPON YOUR OWN GOODNESS! GOD IS PRESENT THERE! BUON GIORNO, BUONA/BRAVA GENTE!

HABITUAL, HABITUATING HABITS

Fr. Adalbert Wolski, TOR, claims we are all creatures of habit even in responses. He said that a pastor entered the sanctuary for Mass and, to test the microphone, he tapped it and muttered, "there's something wrong with this mike." The assembly responded, "And also with you."

EVANGELIZATION

Mary Lahiff, SFO, Newsletter Staff

According to Pope Paul VI, as stated in his document "On Evangelization in the Modern World", lay people

"exercise a very special form of evangelization. . . . Their own field of evangelizing activity is the vast and complicated world of politics, society and economics, but also the world of the sciences and the arts, of international life, of the mass media. It also includes other realities which are open to evangelization, such as human love, the family and education of children and adolescents, professional work, suffering."

70. The laity Pope Paul VI
On Evangelization in the Modern World

This is our role, as distinguished from the role of the pastors of the Church which is "to establish and develop the ecclesial community"; however, Pope Paul goes on to say that the laity are sometimes called to work with their pastors in the service of the ecclesial community.

There are many aspects of evangelization and we evangelize through many of our everyday actions without thinking of them as evangelization. We are evangelizing through our work and by our efforts to help others in any kind of need. However, for the purposes of this article, we will concentrate on the role of evangelizing the public sector of our society.

Christ is the Evangelizer, but He chooses to work through us as His instruments in bringing gospel values and gospel living into present day society. Often, we, as lay members of our Church, have not assumed our responsibility to evangelize our contemporary society. We have allowed a pseudo-culture to take over. Too many of us remain silent.

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Francis of Assisi was like a flash of light across the medieval sky. His impact on the society of his day has persisted through the centuries. By reason of our Baptism and our Commitment as Secular Franciscans, we have the mandate to keep alive the values of Jesus Christ. As laity we have the responsibility for political and economic matters. Faith determines values, and our society has downplayed the role of religion through a misinterpretation of the idea of separation of church and state. As a result, a vast segment of our people are unable to make sound moral choices and decisions in private and public life.

What should we do? How can we counteract the pervasive selfishness and lack of moral restraint we see around us?

Pope Paul tells us that evangelization is never possible without the action of the Holy Spirit. It follows that first and foremost we must be people of deep prayer, steeped in the Gospel. In our weakness God will work through us as his instruments in this work.

Then, we must move from prayer to action - from Gospel to life and back again to Gospel to keep alive the values of Jesus Christ. Anything we do to bring about Jesus' values is evangelization.

Some suggestions:

Become well informed about issues (in government, business, labor, environment, etc.) for their social and moral dimensions. Measure public policy against gospel values. We have an obligation to become involved in issues.

Become informed by reading the Catholic press - your own diocesan newspaper, other Catholic newspapers, and magazines which contain analyses of current

issues. There are many of these available. The *Newsletter* of the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order and other Franciscan magazines and papers are very important.

The Catholic Conference Office of your State is a rich source of information. Among its many efforts is to keep abreast of issues at the State and Federal level and to inform the Bishops of local dioceses of their impact on society and the Church. Contact your own diocesan office for information on this.

Throw off timidity and speak out with courage and concern. Write letters to your public representatives, to newspaper editors, and get your ideas out there. Be part of it.

Our Faith is a profoundly social faith. We must be in community with others. Our biggest obstacle is our own inertia. We must act. We can't excuse ourselves from becoming involved in some way.

Protest objectionable TV programs to the station, the network, and the sponsors. Keep a close watch here. Protest availability of so-called "adult" literature in local drugstores, convenience stores, etc., where it is readily accessible.

Support good issues when they appear - on education, family life, children, investment in inner cities to create jobs. Many good issues fail, because of lack of support.

Affirm human rights - always with a preference for the poor. There is a diminution and violation of human rights today. Yes, this is evangelization - to liberate the whole human person. People have a right to food, shelter, medical care, and meaningful employment. The poor have dignity;

listen to them and work with them to better their condition. The poor have rights. Work has dignity; workers have rights.

Know your facts, become informed and make your voice and opinions heard. The more you do these things in unison with others, the more effective you will be. Be the leaven in your parish, your neighborhood. Get others involved. Bishops and priests are limited in what they can do in the political and economic areas. They can teach about issues, but the actual implementation belongs to the laity.

On hearing the Gospel passage describing Jesus sending out His disciples two by two to carry on His work, Francis was moved to exclaim, "This is what I want; this is what I long for with all my heart." We, too, are sent, by reason of our Baptism and Confirmation when we received the Holy Spirit. We, as members of the Body of Christ, the Church, have our own particular work to accomplish in the effort of evangelization. No one else can do our work for us.

Each member is important in this task. You as an individual, as well as in community with others, have a specific contribution to make. Jesus works through us as His instruments to usher in His Kingdom. We must not fail Him.

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, I love you very much. I beg you to spare the life of the unborn baby that I have spiritually adopted who is in danger of abortion.

Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen

AVAILABLE FROM THE NEWSLETTER

The General Constitutions - \$5 if shipped book rate; \$6.50, first class mail.

Handbook of Regionalization - \$3.

MISSION STATEMENT

FOURTEENTH QUINQUENNIAL CONGRESS

NATIONAL FRATERNITY - - U.S.A.

SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

Whereas, the Representatives to the Fourteenth Quinquennial Congress of the National Fraternity, U.S.A., Secular Franciscan Order, have met at Dayton, Ohio, in plenary session from August 2, 1992 through August 7, 1992, and

Whereas, formal and informal prayer, discussion and reflection have accompanied said plenary session, and

Whereas, we wish to make available in concrete form for dissemination to the fraternities, regions, and provinces which we here represent a distillation of the wisdom, experience, and resolve here attained,

We, the Secular Franciscans here gathered, do respond to Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Exhortation, *Christifideles Laici* in this way:

We commit ourselves to the work of Christ

By building up ourselves

Through immersion into the Mystery of God's life shared with us;

Through openness in praise and gratitude for His presence in the world and in other people, wherever hidden, even in the most distressing disguises; and

By building up Christ's Church

Through the sharing of His spirit and life within our fraternities among our own brothers and sisters, and

Through joyful service in and to the world and to other people; and

We commit ourselves further to undertake this mission as transparent witnesses of Christ, the ultimate peacemaker and bridge-builder.

THE FRANCISCAN MOMENT IS JESUS CHRIST, WHOSE TIME IS NOW!

THE QUINQUENNIAL CONGRESS

The fourteenth Quinquennial opened at the University of Dayton, Sunday, August 2nd with Mass celebrated by the Most Rev. Daniel E. Pilarczyk, Archbishop of Cincinnati. The Congress, with the theme Christ's Faithful People - The Challenge and Response, was attended by at least 530 members of the Franciscan family.

The facilities and food were exceptional; the overall environment was most hospitable. The scheduled speakers gave messages that provoked thought with the result that many of the discussion sessions ran over time. Following are several of the addresses condensed.



The keynote address was given by the Most Rev. Charles J. Chaput, Bishop of Rapid City, South Dakota. who is a Capuchin and former Minister of St. Conrad Province. In addition to diocesan duties, he is

also Moderator of the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry. The theme of his address was "The Franciscan Moment".

From *Lumen Gentium*, the central document of Vatican II, we must believe: That the Church is the sacrament of Christ, and we must carry on his work. That the Church was founded by Christ. That the Church is the People of God, not just the hierarchy. That the role of the laity is the sanctification of the world. And that the eschatological nature

of the pilgrim Church is significant to our eternal life.

The Franciscan Moment is to embrace the gospel and our Rule. In the cultural war that we are facing, we have a role to play, something to say. Our personal lives must indicate conversion. We must be in the forefront in promoting peace and justice; we must accept all people. We must recommit to re-evangelization; we must begin by evangelizing ourselves.

It is not permissible for anyone to remain idle. If we are true Franciscans, we can change the world.

The Nature and Dignity of the Call Mrs. Patricia Normile, SFO

Patti, a wife and mother of two, has taken her teacher's training far beyond the class room. She has directed youth retreats and has spent some years as a hospital chaplain. She has also authored two books on ministering to the sick. She is currently minister of Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity, Cincinnati.



God will call us again and again. The nature of the call is the essence of our yearning to follow Christ. The mystery is part of his nature. The mystery is so essential, because it is in exploring the mystery that we discover God again and again. Our call to follow Christ is steeped in dignity. In following, we

become the branches and the workers.

Our call to rebuild the Church must begin within our families, parishes, neighborhoods, the world at large. **We are in the building business.** We are building Church; we are building community. If we are grafted to Christ, that is our mission at all times.

As flowers practice heliotropism, we must practice Christotropism - we must always turn our faces toward God.

We are called to holiness. Holiness is the norm to which God calls us. We are created in His image. Therefore, if we are the humans we should be, we will be holy.

The world is full of hungry people, who do not know for what they hunger, who do not realize they hunger for God. As workers, we are called to cultivate that hunger, to make the hungry realize their search is for God.

We are called to holiness and we are called to bring a friend or relative.

The Response to the Challenge Dr. Doris Donnelly

Wife, mother, author, and professor of Religious Studies at John Carroll University in Cleveland, Doris introduced her talk by telling of her years of relationship with St. Francis. She is not a Secular, but she knows him well.



Rebuild My Church:

Rebuild - an active verb, an active challenge, which involves commitment. You cannot rebuild what you do not love. The message of the Resurrection is to love the Church so much that you can rebuild it.

My - the Church of Jesus Christ who referred to Isaiah - the stone rejected by the builders would become the cornerstone - that is the call to holiness. We are called to be as holy as Jesus; He is the corner stone against which each of us is measured. We are called to rebuild the infrastructure, the inner structure. We must ask is the fraternity working, the formation, the outreach?

Church - The Church is us - the People of God.

The word build means to build up, to affirm, to praise. We praise when someone exceeds our expectations. God says, "My delight is to exceed your expectations every day." But our eyes are not open widely enough to see the gifts. Get in the habit of praising God regularly for who He is and what He does. Francis did it all the time.

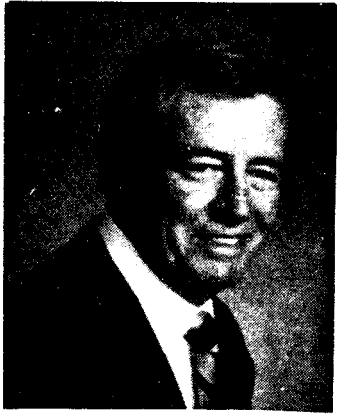
We must affirm, praise people. John Paul II says to evangelize, not criticize. People are so good that Christ died for them.

Our job of building is to build bridges, the bridges of praising people, of peacemaking, and of building up the world.

Build my world. God is in the world right now. Immersed in it. It takes a person of faith, hope, and love to uncover the presence of love in the world. We must find Jesus, the transparent one.

Your response to the challenge of Rebuild My Church, Build Bridges, Build My World is urgent.

Franciscan Roots of Responsibility William Hocker, SFO



Bill is a native of New Mexico where he lives with his wife. They have five children and four grandchildren. He is a graduate of the California College of Mortuary Science. He is a past Minister of the Secular Province of St.

John the Baptist and is now a member of the Province of Our Lady of Guadalupe, #33.

Christ left His followers the responsibility of carrying on His work. Responsibility is a necessary element in life. It is not something to fear. It sets us free.

The Franciscan approach is to do what is ours to do. Do not be afraid to change our fraternities in order to revitalize them. We can poison ourselves by being afraid to look at new things.

We should seek perfection without being compulsive perfectionists.

Spirituality Justin Carisio, SFO

Justin, his wife, and two sons live in Wilmington, Delaware. He is the current Minister of San Damiano Fraternity, is active in Regionalization, and is the Chair of the National Ecology Commission. He was educated at La Salle and Johns Hopkins Universities. He is also active in civic organizations.

By virtue of our profession we accept that we will strive to live visibly spiritual lives.



The challenge to show Christ to the world through the way we live our lives, while a special concern of moderns, has been around a long time. Much space is taken up in the New Testament letters of Paul and John reminding our early sisters and brothers that if you accept baptism you have to live in Christ. You can't be a pagan anymore. You must be holy, for you are now part of the Body of Christ.

How should our lives show that we have accepted the new life of Christ? What characterizes our spirituality?

Let me suggest three foundational principles for organizing our thoughts about Secular Franciscan spirituality.

First and foremost, we must persist in charity. Second, the informing principle of our tertiary spirituality is penance. Third, Franciscan spirituality is fundamentally evangelical as opposed to apostolic.

In living our spirituality, we should see two things occur: we should become holy and whole. Holiness and wholeness are mirror images. The human person cannot be whole except in Christ. And the person who is whole in Christ cannot fail to be holy. We should practice living as though each

moment offers a new, a rich experience of God that is more than we can imagine. If we walk through life looking for more of God than we already know, the mystery that is life in Christ will become like sunlight and the air we breathe. It will be a freshness that greets us every day.

VIDEO TAPES OF CONGRESS

A professional videographer was employed to videotape each event of the Congress intended for all the participants. Alternative sessions and special group sessions were not taped. To minimize the number of two-hour video tapes needed to contain the recorded events, talks and/or liturgies were combined in their entirety, according to their length and not necessarily in the order in which they occurred. Following is a list of the tapes as they are being offered.

Video Tape #	EVENT
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1.	"The Franciscan Moment" by Most Rev. Charles J. Chaput, OFM Cap.
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2.	"Regionalization Information Session" by Richard Morton, SFO & "The Nature and Dignity of the Call" by Patricia Normile, SFO.
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3.	"The Response to the Challenge" by Doris Donnelly & "Franciscan Roots of Responsibility" by Bill Hocker, SFO.
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4.	Eucharistic Celebration with National Spiritual Assistant, Fr. Camillus MacRory, OFM Cap, celebrant.
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	& "Spirituality" by Justin Carisio, SFO
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5.	Eucharistic Celebration at Holy Angels Church, with Most Rev. Daniel E. Pilarczyk, DD, celebrant & Eucharistic Celebration with National Spiritual Assistant, Fr. Larry Landini, OFM, celebrant.
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6.	"Formation of Laity in Culture" by Joseph Holland & "Response" by Cynthia Loudon, SFO, and Dr. Jerry Friga, SFO.
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7.	"State of the Order" by Richard Morton, SFO, NAFRA Minister & "Evangelization in U.S. Culture" by Fr. Max Langenderfer, OFM.
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8.	Eucharistic Celebration with National Spiritual Assistant, Fr. Adalbert Wolski, TOR, celebrant & "St. Clare" by Sr. Dianne Short, OSC, at banquet.
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9.	Panel Discussion, with the four members of the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants and Fr. Kevin Schindler-McGraw, OFM Conv, General Assistant.
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	& Mission Statement of the Congress, by Mary Mazotti, SFO
--	---

	& "The Source of Action and Contemplation" by Sr. Norma Rocklage, OSF.
--	--

10	Eucharistic Celebration, with National Spiritual Assistant, Fr. Stephen Gross, OFM Conv, celebrant
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	& Closing Liturgy, with Fr. Kevin Schindler-McGraw, OFM Conv, General Assistant, celebrant.
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Individual tapes cost \$18.00 each, plus shipping.

All 10 tapes can be ordered as a set for the cost of 9 tapes, (\$162.00) plus shipping. Thus, you get one free tape when you buy the whole set as one order.

Orders may be placed through the SFO Province of St. John the Baptist, 1615 Vine St., Cincinnati, OH 45210. You will be billed for your order, because shipping costs will vary.

FRANCISCANS AT THE U.N.

Dr. Anneta Duveen, SFO,
Peace & Justice Rep. to the U.N.

High praise to the many provinces that responded to Jim Costello's moving article on FRANCISCANS, NGO at the United Nations. Repetition is the keynote to success, and I hope that the remaining provinces, regions, and the emerging regions will distribute the individual membership forms at every meeting (particularly local fraternity meetings) and mail them (with a small donation) to Bro. Kevin Smith, OSF.

We need a strong presence in FRANCISCANS - and this can only occur through your individual memberships. We Secular Franciscans, who are on the cutting edge of every segment of society, have experience on both spiritual and temporal levels that are unique in the history of the Catholic Church and in the world. To be able to interact with 175 (and growing) countries in one body, the United Nations, and the Non-Governmental Organizations as well, is an unsurpassed opportunity for our Order.

This has been an extraordinary year at the United Nations. The main focus has been on the Earth Summit Conference in Rio, June 1-14, 1992, and the preparatory meetings in New York.

I attended three of the UNCED (the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development) meetings in New York. Two were in the Women's Caucus and one on solutions to the environmental crisis. This last meeting presented the idea that the major armament corporations should devote part of their staff and function to environmental cleanup receiving monies from the military budget, and increasing this corporate activity each year. This would utilize the corporate structures and technical personnel

in a peaceful and constructive manner. The session leader said there was no hope of incorporating this idea in the Earth Summit Charter at this time. However, the Earth Summit Charter has been delayed for two years and perhaps by then there will be some receptivity. It is a magnificent concept.

Archbishop Renato R. Martino, the Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations is a dedicated and dynamic member of the Secular Franciscan Order. Brother Marius Grone, OSF, and John Gallagher, SFO, are video-taping an interview of His Excellency and me relating to the impact of his Franciscan vocation on his diplomatic work for the vatican. (The tape is on Franciscans at the United Nations.)

Archbishop Martino included not only a sculpture of St. Francis and references in all of his press interviews in Rio, but in his official presentation, and the homily of His Eminence Cardinal Angelo Sodano of the Vatican at the Earth Summit they both quoted St. Francis.

Cardinal Sodano concluded his official statement on a note of inspiration, "God grant that the Rio Conference will offer our contemporaries new reasons to hope, to believe, and to love."

As head of the Holy See Delegation to the Earth Summit, Archbishop Martino stated, "The 'Canticle of the Creatures' of St. Francis of Assisi could well become the anthem of a new generation that loves and respects in one embrace the Creator and all of God's creatures."

There were no arrangements made for religious services; however, the President of Brazil, Fernando Carlos Collor, provided his personal offices in Rio for a Mass on the

Feast of the Most Holy Trinity (for the Heads of State and Government) and read St. Francis' Canticle of the Creatures during it.

Archbishop Martino is the third Permanent Observer; he follows Archbishop Giovanni Cheli, also a Secular Franciscan, and the late Archbishop Alberto Giovanetti. Our Secular Franciscan Order has had a significant influence on the United Nations.

John Quigley, OFM, has written a report on the dual activities of the Franciscans at Rio Centro. Brother (as he asks to be addressed) Hermann Schaluck, OFM, Minister General, attended. Fr. Quigley felt that the Franciscan influence at Rio Centro and at the Global Forum was significant and conducted a press conference with fifty international reporters present.

Treaties were written and negotiated by NGO (Non-Governmental Organizations) at the United Nations: Poverty Treaty, Treaty on Consumption and Lifestyle, Treaty on Population, Environment and Development among others. The Earth Summit Conference was the spearhead for constructive international awareness and action.

His Holiness, Pope Paul VI, a Secular and the promulgator of our New Rule, established the necessary interaction of the Faithful at the United Nations. It is an arena where Franciscans can bring their unique and proved spirituality to the entire world- a world that is groping for our treasure.

HIGH COST OF ILLNESS

A young lad was reporting on the condition of his hospitalized grandfather. After reciting the list of treatments and medications, he said, "Granddad is improving though; they've moved him from the expensive care unit."

FRANCISCANS NETWORK

Margaret Jaynes, SFO
Minister, Immaculate Conception, #12

Ronald Pihokker, SFO, National Vice-Minister, and I represented the National Fraternity at the Network Symposium in Denver following our Congress. Over 400 Franciscans were there; less than five percent were Seculars. Franciscans Network is the only organization which includes representatives of every U.S. group of the diverse Franciscan family, and this was the first North American Symposium. The speakers, none Franciscan, suggested potential approaches to living traditional Franciscan values in the 21st century.

At a break-out session, Ron and I met with the Secular Franciscans, spiritual assistants, and animators. We opened the floor to questions they wanted addressed. Some of their concerns were:

1. Ways of networking with the other branches of the family.
2. Ways of collaborating with and involving the friars and sisters in our charism and ministry.
3. Need for assisting ordained SFOs in their vocation and educating those who are also serving as spiritual assistants.
4. Questioned why associate programs are being promoted rather than the Secular vocation.

We concluded that all of the branches of the family need to be empowered by each other and that we, the SFO, must take the initiative to educate and open the channels of communication.

We feel that future networking will result from this session as well as from the symposium in general. Our Secular Order must play a visible and active role in the Franciscan Family in North America.

THE FRANCISCAN PYRAMID, PART III

The *Edict of Milan*, which was issued by Constantine and Licinius in 313, recognized Christianity as a lawful religion. Pazzelli notes that it "did not essentially change penitential discipline; [but] certain characteristics were merely better delineated. Thus, once admitted into the discipline of penance by the bishop, the sinner became part of a group or special order, called the Order of Penitents, analogous in practice to a religious state, except for its shameful character."¹

Admission into the Order was by imposition of hands (the bishop's) symbolizing God's blessing upon the exercises which the penitent must perform.

By the fourth century, there appeared interdicts - things which the penitent was forbidden to do during his time in the Order, or, in some cases, was forbidden to do for life. He could no longer serve in the military. Neither could he be a merchant nor hold public office as those were considered temptation situations. The married penitent had to abstain from conjugal relations; the widowed penitent could not contract another marriage even after the reconciliation. A celibate could not be married during the penitential period; in some areas, marriage was denied forever.

The increasing austerity had two results:

1. Bishops became very cautious about admissions for fear that the penitent may not be able to meet the restrictions.
2. Not many sinners were terribly interested, preferring to postpone their confessions till the end of life.

We must keep in mind that membership in the Order was not private; so, to be a member was a public admission of having committed serious sin. In addition to being denied a place in the general assembly with

the right to receive Communion, the penitent might be required to wear goat skin sackcloth to symbolize separation from Christ's sheep, chains to symbolize bondage to sin, rags as a symbol of poverty of virtue. Short hair signified slavery to Satan; ashes announced spiritual death like Adam's.²

What happened to the naughty clergy? They were forbidden to join the Order, because of the social stigma. But they had to undergo a discipline called degradation, which forced them to retire from public life and to do penance, often in a monastic setting.

The prohibition against conjugal relations was one of the factors leading to clerical celibacy in the west. And the use of monasteries by penitent clergy led to the view that monasteries were places of private penance. Thus it developed that laymen could join religious orders as an alternative to public penance, although a layman under censure could never become a cleric.

Life is never dull; people are not always predictable. Another development occurred. While serious sinners avoided the Order of Penitents, because of its harshness, ordinary people began to embrace the Order as a method of increasing their love of God and their piety; the commitment was for life.

By the fifth century, young men who were about to begin preparations for clerical life or those about to enter a monastic order often joined the Order of Penitents as an exercise in spiritual perfection. Because they could not marry while in the Order, what began as a self-imposed restriction became law in the Roman Church.

Another outcome was an unofficial sacrament of penance which eventually replaced confession only to a bishop. From the third century,

Christians sometimes sought spiritual guidance even from another laymen. Those who joined monasteries sought the guidance of an older monk. "Most of the monks were, of course, laymen, and this practice of theirs was not a sacrament in the strict Catholic sense, but it was a sacramental activity in the broad sense."³ Gradually, many ordinary laymen used monk confessors.

The decline in canonical penitence was strong in the fifth century, and its eventual change was reinforced by St. Patrick in Ireland. Most of the priests were monks; cities were not the rule; bishops were virtually non-existent. It fell to the priest-monks to administer to the sinful. They would travel into the country side and hear confessions. On the next trip, if the penance were satisfied, they would pray with the penitent and ask God's pardon. Not being bishops, their action was considered merely a blessing.

A century later, the Celtic monks were assisting in the conversion of the continent and wherever they traveled, they used their method of confession, which, despite objections by some of the older European clergy, became law in the mid 600s. However, its convenience did not lessen the severity of some of the penances, and there developed the need for little books carried by the clergy which listed sins by order of gravity and also listed the penance.

Because penances were stiff (not to mention inconvenient), penitents were allowed to substitute or even hire another as a voluntary penitent. It is a matter of record that those who voluntarily joined the Order of Penitents often made penitential pilgrimages for the real sinner. The justification for this apparently came from Galatians 6:2: "one carries the burden of the other." It made life easy for the wealthy with many servants.

The penitential books with their lists of sins and penances and the idea of repeated confessions led some to a mechanical attitude toward the sacrament. In the early 600s, St. Isidore, who was bishop of Seville, taught that penance is not just an act or rite, nor a temporary attitude, but should be a constant disposition "of the religious spirit, a permanent consecration to a new style of life, interior as well as exterior..."⁴

By the middle ages, the austerity of the Order had all but eliminated any but the voluntary members. During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the Order thrived. Previously, being a religious was considered the epitome of Christianity. Then there occurred "an 'awakening' of the consciousness of the laity. In contemporary terms, we would speak of this evolution as a growing awareness of the universal call to holiness. Gradually the idea of Christian perfection broadened; increasingly the laity themselves became involved in the pursuit of holiness."⁵

But why was there an "awakening"? Usually numerous things contribute to a radical change. But, between now and the next issue, consider the activity in our churches during World War II - attendance at both liturgies and devotions. Consider our growing panic now at the moral tone of our culture. Do we ever turn enthusiastically to God, unless we are in trouble?

¹ Pazzelli, Rev. Raffaele, TOR, St. Francis And The Third Order, 1982, Franciscan Herald Press, p. 9.

² Martos, Joseph, Door To The Sacred 1982, Image Books, p. 325.

³ Martos, op. cit. p. 328.

⁴ Pazzelli, op. cit. p. 18.

⁵ Stewart, Rev. Robert M., OFM, The Rule of The Secular Franciscan Order: Origins, Development, Interpretation 1991, Istituto Storico Dei Cappuccini, Rome, p. 107 ff.

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BOOK REVIEWS

The Rule Of The Secular Franciscan Order: Origins, Development, Interpretation

Rev. Robert M. Stewart, OFM
Istituto Storico Dei Cappuccini, Rome, 1991
Available from Fr. Stewart, The Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, NY 14778. \$45.00.

The bad news is the cost; the good news is that, to the serious Secular or student of the Order, it's worth it. It is not a sweet book with a myriad of sentimentality which the reader might remember for a day. It is the author's doctoral dissertation, thoroughly researched and expertly formatted.

It includes some historical background on the development of the Order of Penitents and carries it a bit further than Pazzelli's *St. Francis and the Third Order*. The best available proof is offered as to what was our first Rule. It compares the various revisions of the Rule.

The formatting is such that the reader does not need a stack of other books when it is necessary to refer to...Many of the foot notes contain valuable information, and, in compar-

ing versions of the Rule, they are laid out in parallel columns.

Fr. Bob, who is a member of the Graduate Teaching Faculty of the Franciscan Institute, earned his masters in theology at the Washington Theological Union, Silver Spring, Md., and his doctorate in theology at the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California.

He had planned working on the First Order Rule, but then realized that much, "maybe too much" had already been done on religious rules. "In retrospect, I am grateful that I did my dissertation on the SFO Rule. Initially it struck me as quite bland and it only opened up as quite powerful through that study." Originally he felt that it should be done by a Secular; however, none was on the "doctoral horizon" and he realized that it would have been difficult, if not impossible for a layman to gain access to some of the archival materials still housed in the OFM General Curia.

The Holy Father, John Paul II, admonished us to learn, love, and live our Rule. We can neither live nor love what we do not know. Fr. Bob's book is an excellent source of necessary information.

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REVIEW CONTINUED

Visiting The Sick, A Guide for Parish Ministers

Patti Normile, SFO
St. Anthony Messenger Press,
1615 Republic Street, Cincinnati, OH 45210,
1992.

The thought occurred that, as so many SFOs are special ministers of the Eucharist, this could be valuable reading. And how many *Nihil Obstats* and *Imprimaturs* have you seen in recent books?

Patti mixes sound theology, common sense, teaching, and compassion into a very palatable product. Numerous examples make the points; when the examples are similar to experiences had by the reader, learning increases.

In a section entitled "Your Gifts to the Patient", Patti writes, "Someone said that a friend is one who sings us the song of our hearts when we have forgotten the melody."

The final chapter includes prayers for many occasions in the life of the hospitalized or shut-in as well as the Communion service.

FROM THE EDITOR

Again, thanks for the many encouraging notes; regrettably, it just isn't possible to answer each one. Special kudos to those local fraternity ministers who are subscribing for each member, or who duplicate the *Newsletter*. The information is for all members.

In your busy schedules and as soon as possible, it would be appreciated if you could send a report on the T.V. PROJECT. Locally, a parishioner, who was interested and who sent all 28 letters, received a phone call from one of the companies asking if she belonged to an organization. She said she belonged to the R.C. Church, but nothing else. The caller said the company would like to know who was behind the campaign - it (the company) had been deluged with letters. Bully for us!

A fraternity minister recently phoned to update the roster. She mentioned the project and said, regardless of the outcome, she did not wish to stand before the judgment seat and admit she had never tried.

Also thanks to all who promptly returned the form for updating the Directory of Local Fraternities.