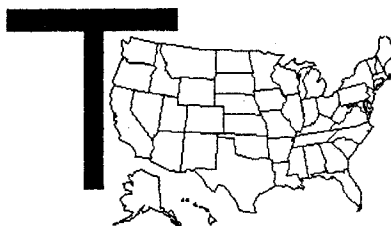

The National Fraternity
of
THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER



Issue Number 4

THE NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

Summer, 1994

THE IMPORTANCE OF FORMATION

I am writing this after attending a meeting of the National Fraternity Formation Commission. Attending members of the commission were: Marilyn Friga (Franklin, VA), Fr. Matthew Gaskin, OFM (Butler, NJ), Diane Halal (Los Alamitos, CA), Bill Niggemeyer (Spokane, WA), Ron Pihokker (Clifton, NJ), Edward Shirley (Austin, TX), and Mary Lou Young (Olpe, KS). Both Diane and Marilyn retired from the commission after having completed over seven years of service. Our thanks and appreciation go out to the both of them for their many years of dedication and all the expertise they have shared with the Commission and the National Fraternity. Both Diane and Marilyn are valuable formation resource people and I know they will continue to make major contributions to the maturation of formation programs around the country.

When we consider the subject of formation, we realize that, in many respects, it is the most important activity the leadership of our Order is charged with. To support this endeavor, the National Fraternity established the Formation Commission several years ago. Its mission statement reads in part: "The mission of the commission, as a prophetic ministry, is to advise and provide consultation...with regard to the vision and direction of Secular Franciscan Formation in concert with the theology and spirituality of the Secular Franciscan Rule, Constitutions..."

(continued on p. 13)

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REGIONALIZATION

-A Reality

Regionalization as defined by the SFO General Constitutions is "...the organic union of all the local fraternities existing in a territory or which can be integrated into a natural unity, either by geographic proximity, or by common problems and pastoral realities...and assures the link between the local fraternities and the national fraternity." (Art.61.1)

We have made a permanent, lifelong commitment by profession to the Secular Franciscan Order Rule and have promised to live the Rule given to us by the Church. Ch. III.20 states we are "...divided into fraternities of various levels--local, regional, national and international. Each one has its own moral personality in the Church. These various fraternities are coordinated and united according to the norm of this rule and of the constitutions."

Given this understanding and acceptance of our willingness to live our *Franciscan Way of Life*, why has regionalization caused some distress and anxiety? The primary reason is simply that we are human beings who are sometimes fearful of change. There has been some confusion about our relationship with Spiritual Assistants and the connection with friar provinces that canonically established our fraternities. Lack of information exists about what is involved in transition from provinces to regions.

While there is resistance to change, if we understand that our Order will be stronger and there will be a recognition that we are one order responsible for our own governance, we can work toward accomplishing the goal of full regionalization as approved by the National Fraternity Directive Board.

There are now 11 established Regional Fraternities in the United States from the Pacific

Ocean to the Atlantic, including Hawaii, and from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. It is expected that 12 more emerging Regional Fraternities will request approval of establishment at the October, 1994, National Fraternity Meeting.

If your fraternity has not begun the journey toward becoming part of a Regional Fraternity, find out what is being done in your geographic area. Ask your local fraternity council to provide a program explaining what is involved and how you can help. An excellent help is the Handbook of Regionalization, prepared by the Regionalization Committee and approved by the National Fraternity in October, 1991. Each Provincial Minister and Provincial Spiritual Assistant has these books.

It is a wonderful time to discover the many Franciscan brothers and sisters who belong to fraternities that may meet nearby and whom you may have never met. The experience of learning about other fraternities close to yours will be an exciting, rewarding experience. It's like finding members of your family that you did not know about, who share your vision of St. Francis' dream and seek to bring his dream into the world.

The Regionalization Committee desires to be of assistance to you--informing, educating, facilitating--to bring about full regionalization for the United States in 1996, as mandated by NAFRA.

*Geraldine Rome, Vice Minister
Regionalization Chairperson
12266 N. Lakeview Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70810*



LORD OF THE LEDGER

(From an article of the same name by Joseph Colosimo, in FRA NOI, Chicago, IL,
submitted by John K. Sanborn, SFO National Treasurer)

Fra Luca Pacioli was the father of modern accounting. He was one of those dazzling Renaissance luminaries, a man for all seasons, who was conversant in many disciplines. He was familiar with the more famous artistic masters of his age who eventually overshadowed him. Born in 1445 near Florence, Italy to Bartolomeo Pacioli and his bride, and educated by the Franciscan Friars, he eventually became one of their number in 1472. He had been educated into the world of economics and exposed to the rigor of mercantilism. For the remainder of his life he would intersperse the spiritual and moral philosophy of the Franciscan order into his work. Business and commercial accounts and calculations were prepared "a nome di Dio," (in the name of God) and often many completed "a sui laude et gloria," (for His praise and glory).

Fra Luca's greatest work was his "Summa de Arithmetica, Geometria, Proportioni et Proportionalita," (Compendium of Mathematics, Geometry, Algebra and Proportionality). This book had a great influence on Donato Bramante, the creative genius of 15th century architecture. Leonardo da Vinci was tutored in mathematics using the book and went on to paint in inspiring proportional harmony. Fra Luca's proficiency in mathematics also found application in military strategy, but above all, in business.

Venetian merchants, then the mercantile leaders of the Western World, utilized the system of bookkeeping that Fra Luca had developed and refined. With the introduction of the Gutenberg Press, Fra Luca's "Summa" was put to publication for public consumption in 1494. The short chapter on accounting, "Particularis de Computis et Scripturis (Methods of Accounting and Reporting) was translated into several languages and became the standard textbook for accounting for centuries to come. It was issued to the world as an accounting manual that established "double entry" bookkeeping as the universal standard of accounting for Venice, all of Italy, and eventually the world.

Fra Luca modestly called himself a codifier of mathematical knowledge, but C.A. Cooke states that, "The importance of double-entry systems of keeping books lies not in arithmetic, but in its metaphysics," (its rationale). Fra Luca was indeed the consummate "Renaissance Man," and an inspiration to SFO treasurers everywhere.

Printed Material Available

From the National Treasurer's Office

A. Distributed at October, 1992, Directive Board meeting:

1. Fraternity Treasurer's Reporting Requirements /Forms
2. Control of Computer Viruses
3. USCC Letter regarding SFO tax exempt status
4. Treasurer's Guidelines
5. Treasury Guidelines ("How much is enough?")
6. Record Retention

B. Distributed at October, 1993, Directive Board meeting:

1. Accounting System and Forms for Provincial/Regional Treasurers
2. Obtaining a Provincial/Regional Employer ID Number

3. Communal Celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours

4. Requests: Preserving and Extending SFO way of life

5. Per Capita Donation Guidelines

Also available:

1. NAFRA Annual Financial Report for 1992 and forward

2. Print out-individual Provincial/Regional data, includes:

Provincial/Regional Council Members
Fraternity Ministers' Names/Addresses
Fraternity Names, Locations, membership numbers

Contact: John Sanborn, SFO, National Treasurer
1611 West River Parkway
Grand Island, NY 14072-2418



RECYCLED PAPER



Franciscans and the Chapter of Mats

The first North American Franciscan Chapter of Mats will meet in Denver in 1996.

If it can get off the ground, this will be quite an historical event--and maybe epic. How so? Well, in the first place, it will be the first time *Franciscans* from the three orders will meet as equals. The new *Franciscans Network* is trying to bring this all together--not "friars," "nuns," and "seculars," just Franciscans meeting to share the common North American experience of Franciscanism. Maybe this may be a seminal event--an event that will help us get our act together as Americans and Franciscans as we move to the 21st Century.

We are certainly different from our Franciscan predecessors who brought us into the 20th Century. More culturally attuned to the European expression of Catholicism they look differently at the world--a vale of tears to be endured only at the peril of your soul. We, on the other hand, were formed under a unique experience called Pax Americana, the result of the rise of capitalism as the most successful economic venture in the postwar world. We are different because we were religiously formed under Catholicism but our secular formation is Protestant. American capitalism is the product of the Protestant ethic, an ethic of "a day's work for a day's pay" and "work hard, God will reward you." Our Catholic predecessors gave us Thomas a Kempis' The Imitation of Christ to read as a daily work ethic; our Protestant friends were reading Adam Smith's Wealth of

Nations and viewing Washington, Jefferson and Franklin as the spirit, soul and body of enlightened Christian persons. "Bloom where you are planted" is a modern rendition of the Lutheran idea of vocation--one need not join an order or go to a monastery to be a servant of God. The Calvinist idea of your work being the instrument of your salvation and wealth being a blessing for a job well done makes a Franciscan blush.

So where are we in all this? When Saint Bonaventure was hunting for a biblical figure that he could compare best with Saint Francis, he picked Job. The name, Job, he pointed out means "sufferer." In a word, the symbol of the servant of God is a sufferer. Our founding fathers looked at the same Old Testament book for a sign of who is among the elect and damned and found Job as the best example of a man blessed by God. The reason? Not his suffering but his wealth! He had a large, healthy family, a heck of a lot of real estate and enough livestock to make Ben Cartwright of the Ponderosa look like a pauper--even though the latter was storied to own a good chunk of Colorado.

Our Franciscan side looks at Job as a sufferer with great suspicion over money--flee from it; our American side looks at Job as a sort of Old Testament Andrew Carnegie--very adroitly avoiding any dungheap on which to lay his wealth. As a matter of fact we associate walking into excrement as a sign that we are going to get money! Is then, being an American Franciscan an oxymoron? Certainly the idea of a "poor" American creates as much angst as a "rich" Franciscan. But as anyone who has traveled to the land of the "have-nots" in

the Third World knows, our poorest Franciscan here, friar, nun or secular, is materially well off indeed. The poor of the world are looking at us as an almost macabre 20th Century rendition of the Dives/Lazarus story. They would love to change places with the poor of America--it would be a breathless blessing!

Maybe as we prepare to join together in 1996, we can come to grips with who we are. Obviously we are not copies of 13th century Franciscans. And who would want to be? Could you see the spiritual mentality of Saint Angela of Foligno prevalent today--praying for her husband and children to die so she can lead a life dedicated to God? Hardly! And it would be arrogant to judge her as she was a creature of her time. History has a way of pointing the direction in which God is moving the world. We have seen Communism fall lifeless like a lead ball. As if to vindicate our Protestant forefathers, John Paul II gave papal approbation to our economic system as the best people have to offer albeit with strong admonitions towards gospel stewardship.

So here we are--American Franciscans. The very poor I personally know in far off places, and they are quite destitute, don't want me to leave America's shores and come live in a thatched hut next door to them in some romantic display of 13th Century Franciscanism although that may still be a calling for those who are on the mystical path. Mine is the path of the Secular Franciscan. They want me to send help and experience so they can share in some modicum of material security.

There is a place for wealth in the world

and God knows there is a lot of suffering going on--people like the Old Testament Job abound. The Chapter of Mats may be historical and epic-making for what we have to say of ourselves and our relationship to the world. What is the corporate face of American Franciscanism going to be like entering into the 21st Century? Will it be relevant to our position of wealth and our needs as Americans? Demographic studies have been completed concerning the seminary training needed for the 21st Century. The movement is away from European Catholicism, heavily laden as it is with high ritual and intellectual pursuits, toward the Third World. Among other things this means sharing in the American dream. It should mean a spiritually compatible world for Franciscans--but will it be for American Franciscans? Are we yet at home with our Protestant ethic, money and the meaning of life?

Alan Ouimet, SFO

Founder & Director

Franciscan Family Apostolate

The National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order considers the work of Franciscan Family Apostolate to be in accordance with the SFO Rule. By offering Franciscans opportunities to do as Father Francis did--to care for the poor and oppressed--it is an outward sign of our conversion to gospel life. It enables us "to build a more fraternal and evangelical world so that the kingdom of God may be brought more effectively."(Rule of SFO,Ch.2:11,14)

Because of the thousands aided by American Secular Franciscans, FFA and Alan Ouimet were awarded the Benemerenti Medal by Pope John Paul II in 1987.

PRAISE GOD FOR THE GOOD
GREEN EARTH!

(From The Secular FOCUS,
St. Conrad Province)

by Jim Anthony



Praise God for our good green earth. Praise Him for the gifts He has given us. Praise Him for beautiful water which nourishes all His creatures. Praise Him for chaste, pure air which sustains all of creation. Praise Him for mother earth and for rich soil which gives nourishment to abundant plant life. Our God is good. Our world was created in goodness. We can choose to despoil and exploit this goodness.

Today chemicals are a part of our daily lives: CO₂, H₂O, H₂O₂, NH₃, NaCl to name a few. We also have many manmade chemicals--motor oil, gasoline, cleaners, solvents, adhesives, paints, etc. The chemicals we have are useful and our world would not function as it does if they weren't around. But they can pose hazards for us and the rest of creation if not handled properly.

So what are we to do with chemicals which are no longer useful to us? Companies are required to dispose of chemicals through EPA approved chemical waste disposal companies. Individual households are never monitored because it would cost too much. Yet it is up to the individual consumer to be conscientious when it comes to disposal of unwanted chemicals.

Although it is not a good idea to pour unwanted chemicals down the drain, a water treatment facility is able to process most detergents, soaps and drain openers when diluted. Call your local water treatment facility to determine exactly what they can and cannot handle. A good rule of thumb is that if it doesn't normally go down the drain during usage, don't put it down the drain to dispose of it. Remember, it is always better to purchase biodegradable soaps and detergents than those containing phosphates which kill the

natural bacteria that help decompose waste. A list of chemicals that should not go down the drain includes but is not limited to: petroleum products, solvents, adhesives, paints, industrial cleaners, insecticides, poisons, anything containing heavy metals such as chromium, lead, mercury, etc. or anything labeled flammable.

Most full service automotive shops or oilchange shops accept used motor oil which is then recycled. Never pour motor oil onto the ground. It finds its way into the ground water and eventually drinking water.

Paints often can be donated to a local charity if usable. If unusable, continue to spread paint in thin coats onto scrap cardboard until it is all dried. Then discard the cardboard to the landfill. If discarded wet, paint can find its way into groundwater.

For other chemicals of which you are unsure, many counties now are sponsoring household chemical roundups. Call your local health department to see if one is scheduled. If not, it will get them thinking about sponsoring one. Ask what to do with the unwanted chemical in the meantime. (Note: it is not a good idea to simply let solvents evaporate out of an opened container. They do not simply disappear, they pollute our air.)

Remember, prevention is the best policy. Don't use chemicals unless absolutely necessary (this includes gasoline). If a little more physical exertion can eliminate the use of a chemical, opt for a cleaner planet. If you have to use a chemical, use the most earth-friendly one available. Let's work together to keep our air, water and soil, clean for the benefit of all.

Those of us old enough to remember WWII may remember this slogan which applies to ecology today: **USE IT UP! WEAR IT OUT!**

MAKE IT DO! OR DO WITHOUT!

(Anne Yager, Regional Ecology Commission Chairperson, Troubadours of Peace Region)

Letters from you:

Dear Fellow Franciscans,

Thank you for the National Newsletter. I find it informative and inspiring and I look forward to receiving it.

I was especially glad to hear that the Franciscan sisters at Zagreb have been released. I made copies of the letter from the last Newsletter and had the members of my fraternity sign each one.

I'll be happy to announce the good results when we meet this month. With prayer (and action) all things are possible. We'll keep praying.

I also liked the article in Spanish. It gives us something to think about. My high school Spanish was a help but I mainly read the English side.

Peace & joy,
Peg Newcomer

Enclosed please find my check for \$8 for a two year subscription to The National Newsletter. Since I am no longer Minister of St. George Fraternity, I will no longer receive the complimentary copy.

I have enjoyed and profited from the Newsletter, both personally and for the Fraternity. I will look forward to continuing to receive it.

One question--suggestion--would it be possible to include, at least on an occasional basis, a book list of excellent new Franciscan literature? It is not that we don't all receive a lot of advertising mail, but it is not always easy to make decisions long distance. St. George Fraternity is making a concerted effort to build up its library, and would appreciate some knowledgeable guidance! Thanks so much.

*With peace and joy,
Mardie Dougan, SFO*



Dear Readers: Thank you for your letters. It is encouraging to know what helps and what does not. A book review of Secular Franciscan material is scheduled for the Fall issue. If you have a book either by a Secular Franciscan or about Franciscan life that you wish to have reviewed for The Newsletter, please send it to the Editor (address on p.11). We would welcome someone knowledgeable in current Franciscan literature to contribute the list requested. PPN

+++++++

GRACE

Please grant me
Oh my Lord,
Your holy gift
of giving.

Let me retain,
Dear God,
when I am spent and used,
one millionth of Thy love
and pity for my fellow man.

I pray that I may be of use,
and render back to Thee,
through service to my fellowman,
a tiny fraction of the blessings
of my life.

Let me see them,
the ragged, tattered army
of my misbegotten brethren,
and seeing them,
see Thee.

So that when dusk for me shall fall,
and I am gathered in my father's arms,
You shall say to me,
"Well done, thou
good and faithful son."

by John M. Petric
St. Anthony of Padua Fraternity
Pueblo, CO
(from The Secular FOCUS)



Evangelization 2000

Fraternity Ministers, please share this information with your members. Unless your members are informed, they cannot take into consideration the U.S. Bishops Public Policy interests as they impact on Social Justice and Family Life. There are members of every fraternity who would be interested in the USCC position on issues.

Mary C. Lahiff, Evangelization 2000 Chairperson

HEALTH CARE REFORM: Different bills are coming out of Committee for debate in the full House or Senate. The USCC is focusing on two aspects - **excluding mandated abortion and achieving universal coverage.** Abortion is ethically wrong. Even the Supreme Court stated in a 1980 ruling: "Abortion is inherently different from other medical procedures, because no other procedure involves the purposeful termination of a potential life." (Harris v. McRae). In fact, it destroys actual human life. Federal precedent is against it in many rulings. State precedent is against it, public opinion is against it, the medical profession does not see abortion as an integral part of Health Care and doctors do not like to perform the operation and do not have to. This most controversial of elective procedures should certainly be excluded.

The reasons for supporting **Universal Coverage** are not so well understood. Universal Coverage is being undermined by special interest pressure and anti-immigrant sentiment. The bishops have said, "Real reform cannot offer the promise of universal access without providing effective means to assure coverage (e.g., through employer-provided coverage, government assistance, private action, or a combination of these.) We will measure reform proposals by how completely and effectively they provide true universal coverage. Universal coverage cannot be significantly postponed, because coverage delayed may well be coverage denied. Promises of universal access are no substitutes for the practical means and fiscal investment to assure coverage." The Bishops' advocacy for Universal Coverage is rooted in principles of Catholic social teaching. The common good must be protected and nurtured by the entire community as a means of protecting the fundamental dignity and rights of individuals. Health care is an ingredient for the common good because it is essential for full human dignity and necessary for the proper development of life.

Another item to be wary of is rationing of health care by various means. The important thing is to measure everything against the Gospel teaching and let your legislative representatives know where you stand.

WELFARE REFORM: The administration program has been scaled back considerably but financing remains a problem. Earlier attempts to identify sources of funding have proved unsuccessful. The Administration seems now to be reconsidering the possibility of generating funds by denying services to legal immigrants. In other

words, pitting one group of poor people against another. It is important to continue to communicate to Congress about: 1) your commitment to genuine welfare reform which enables individuals and families to move out of poverty and into full responsible participation in the community; 2) your opposition to funding welfare reform by pitting one group of poor against another; and 3) your opposition to policies or options which hurt children of already impoverished families.

FOREIGN AID REFORM: The new Senate draft of the Foreign Aid reform bill is an improvement in that it links the theme of sustainable development with other elements of the bill. In addition, it adds a new category, "developing human resources," which answers the USCC's concerns about grassroots development programs. The draft Senate Bill includes specific authorization for reconstruction funds in post conflict situations, a major change urged by the USCC. Other potential improvements include the linkage between human rights and democracy.

If you agree with these objectives, write your senators and representative urging action on foreign aid in this session. USCC priorities for the reform include: 1) sustainable development with an emphasis on grass roots development for the poor; 2) reconstruction aid for nations in post conflict situations; 3) support for emergency relief and food aid; and 4) firm opposition to abortion in foreign aid.

FOREIGN AID APPROPRIATIONS: The House passed FY 95 foreign aid appropriations bill (HR 4426) on May 25. The Senate is expected to act before the August recess. The USCC recommends letters to Senators in support of foreign aid urging: 1) maintenance of the FY 95 funding level for overseas food aid for purposes of emergency relief; 2) increase in the level of support for broad based economic development which benefits the poor; and 3) sustained support for refugee assistance.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE LEGISLATION: Several pieces of national environmental justice legislation have been introduced but little progress is expected over the summer. It is interesting to learn that an effort is underway in a number of states. Environmental justice is slowly emerging as a more "front burner" issue. Keep abreast of developments as they occur. Points to take into consideration in evaluating this legislation were given in the Spring issue of the National Newsletter. Keep these issues for reference as all this legislation is ongoing.

(Please duplicate this article and distribute to members of your fraternity. Ask them to consider it and write their view to their elected officials.)

OUR CALL TO BE DISCIPLES

(Go and Make Disciples-continued from Spring issue of The National Newsletter)

Our faith has not been given us for ourselves alone. We are to share it with others. The love we receive we must share with others. The gifts we receive we must use for others. People living in the spirit of today's society do not know why they were made or the great destiny of eternal happiness to which they are called through the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. They do not know God has a great love and longing for them--that they are called to a personal relationship with Him.

Chapter 2, Article 6 of our Rule states: "They have been made living members of the Church by being buried and raised with Christ in baptism; they have been united more intimately with the Church by profession. Therefore, they should go forth as witnesses and instruments of her mission among all people, proclaiming Christ by their life and words."

Witnessing and sharing are two elements of proclaiming Christ. Secular Franciscans have traditionally proclaimed Christ by their witness but perhaps we are reluctant to share by our words. We may speak and act kindly and lovingly towards others yet fail to share the treasure that makes us what we are--our faith, its meaning to us, the message of Jesus, grace, the sacraments, the knowledge of the love of God. Jesus trusts us to make what He has given us known to others. We are called to be His Disciples. What trust He has in us to do this for Him! What a great responsibility we have to do this! We must not fail Him.

Goal II is to assure that all people of the U.S. regardless of culture or economics hear the message of salvation in Jesus, come to the knowledge of truth and be moved to join us in the fullness of faith.

This document exhorts us to continually share the Gospel with those without church affiliation and with Catholics no longer active in the Catholic Church. While we are not to proselytize members of other denominations, we can invite them to experience Jesus Christ in our Church. We are to encourage and welcome any and all who show an interest in the Catholic Church.

We must learn to be warm and sincere in inviting people to experience our liturgies with us. We must foster a welcoming atmosphere in our churches so that others feel free to investigate what we are and how we worship.

Goal III is to bring the teachings of Jesus and Gospel values to public areas of society. The dignity of human life, of each person, the good of families and the common good must be proclaimed to bring about a transformation of society by the saving power of Jesus Christ. Chapter 2, Art.15 of our Rule states, "Let them individually and collectively be in the forefront in promoting justice by the testimony of their human lives and their courageous initiatives. Especially in the field of public life they should make definite choices in harmony with their faith."

During his visit to Denver in August, 1993, our Holy Father described our culture as a "culture of death" which yielded "injustice, discrimination, exploitation, deceit, violence." To reverse this diabolic trend requires the skills and involvement of the laity. Only we, as laity, can carry the values of the Gospel into the workplace, the media, and public policy. We must make our voices heard, loud and clear and often, in supporting cultural elements in our society that reflect Gospel values. (continued on p. 11)

("Go and Make...." from p. 10)

We must challenge those who reject them. This is the goal of our Evangelization 2000 program. The Apostolic Commissions--Peace and Justice, Family, Ecology and Work--seek to help us bring Gospel values into our everyday living experience. We must work to bring about a transformation of society. We cannot choose to not be involved in some way. Jesus calls us to be His Disciples, our Bishops echo this call to every person. No one can claim exemption. We must look for opportunities.

I urge every Secular Franciscan Fraternity to procure a copy of "Go and Make Disciples," Publication No.556-9 from:

Office for Publishing & Promotion Services
United States Catholic Conference
3211 Fourth Street NE
Washington, D. C. 20017-1194

Call: 1-800-235-8722 for cost information.

Mary C. Lahiff, Evangelization 2000

Remember The National Newsletter has a new subscription manager. Many thanks to Dolores Smelko for undertaking this task. Send changes of address and new subscriptions to address on back of The Newsletter.

Have you considered a subscription to The National Newsletter for each member of your fraternity? (See back page for information.)

DEADLINE FOR FALL NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 15, 1994

Please send articles, announcements and suggestions to: Patti Normile, Editor
The National Newsletter
609 Amherst Avenue
Terrace Park, OH 45174
FAX (513) 831-2804

FRANCISCAN SPIRITUALITY

St. Anthony Messenger Press has invited your newsletter editor to write a book about Franciscan Spirituality for Laypersons. IST is an exciting prospect to delve into the eart of what we believe and live. It is also a task I cannot begin to do alone. I need your stories,

stories,

stories of how you live in the spirit of Christ, Francis and Clare.

A few thoughts to guide your consideration of the topic:

- How has being a Secular Franciscan shaped your life in *specific* ways?
- What aspects of Franciscan spirituality are most essential to your life?
- What does "spirituality" mean to you?
- What stories can you share about how Franciscan spirituality lives in you?

The goal of the book is bring the message of Francis and Clare to lay people of the 1990s in ways that will invite them to follow their way of living Gospel to life and life to the Gospel. For those who are already Franciscans, the hope is be to enrich and encourage our Franciscan lifestyle by a deeper understanding of the spirituality that empowers it.

I would appreciate having your contributions by October 15. Names might be used if appropriate or contributions can remain anonymous. Please sign contributions with permission to copy or indicate your wish for anonymity.

Peace and blessings on your contributions to this endeavor,

Patti Normile

<(address in box to left)

From the Editor:

Being editor of your newsletter teaches me a great deal about spirituality. With each issue I proofread again and again. When my copy comes from the printer, I am faced with the inevitable, "Yikes! How did that typo get in there?" In the back of my mind I am usually thinking, "The computer must have done it." But you and I both know the computer adage, "Garbage in, garbage out." My experience with editing is like life. We try to get our lives in order, avoid intentional wrongdoing and sin. Yet problems still arise.



Dick Morton wisely suggested that I need someone else to proofread the copy. Of course, I do. I cannot see my own mistakes. For the same reason we each need a spiritual companion to help us proofread our spiritual life. We can all benefit from having another person to assist us in looking at the direction our lives are taking, to assess where the Lord is leading us and whether we are following the Lord or our own way. My excuse for not having someone else proofread has been that I do not have time. We use the same excuse to justify not having a spiritual director or spiritual companion in our lives. Usually we seek such spiritual guidance when our mistakes become apparent in the "copy" of our lives.

I'm going to find someone to proofread the Newsletter....and I'm going to schedule some time with my spiritual director. How about you?

SFO DEACON ORDAINED

Rev. Mr. Laurence Herbert, SFO, Regional Fraternity Minister of Five Franciscan Martyrs Regional Fraternity, was ordained to the permanent diaconate for the diocese of Orlando, Florida, on June 25, 1994. The Rev. Mr. Herbert was ordained with four other men by in St. James Cathedral by the Bishop of Orlando, Most Rev. Norbert M Dorsey, C.P. Congratulations, Larry!

Office Equipment Needed

The National Ecology Commission needs new or used office equipment: an IBM compatible or Macintosh computer, keyboard, mouse, monitor and laser or ink jet printer plus PageMaker or WordPerfect softwear, a copy machine and FAX. Donations are tax deductible.

Charles Spencer, Chair
National Ecology Commission
107 Jensen Circle
West Springfield, MA 01089
or call (413)737-7600.

Thank you and God bless you!

SISTER FRATERNITIES

We may be familiar with the term "sister (brother?) parish" but have we ever considered "sister Fraternities?" Sister parishes connect parishes in suburbs with parishes in inner cities or parishes in the United States with parishes in other countries. Sister cities link cities in one country with those of another.

Individual local fraternitiess could connect with local fraternities in another country or even a local fraternity from one part of the Unites States with another part of the U.S. One of our brothers, Jim McIntosh, SFO of St. Anthony of Nagasaki Fraternity in Washington, D. C. inquired about setting up a group to connect local fraternities with a "Sister Fraternities." A local fraternity would be enriched by correspondence, maybe tapes, even the possibility of visits. There are countless way of helping each other: prayers, inspiration, cooperation. Who knows what the Holy Spirit will inspire!

If your fraternity is interested in a "sister fraternity" connection, please write to:

Marie Amore, SFO
19146 Mott
Eastpointe, MI 48021

("Importance of Formation" continued from p. 1)

If we, as an Order, are to become more effective and dynamic agents of change our society needs, we need to develop in our brothers and sisters a more profound understanding of what the vocation of a Secular Franciscan is. The work of the Formation Commission supports this. Furthermore, formation is the foundation upon which the work of the apostolic commissions of peace and justice, work, ecology, and the family rests. It is to be vehicle of transformation, transforming a collection of diverse individuals into a community of gospel people not unlike those of the early Church.

Formation for the Order, then, is really an awesomely important task and, as it turns out, a very formidable one. During initial formation, we expect to take a group of individuals, many of whom start as strangers, most having full time employment, many having families, and, in a relative short time lead them through a transformational process that results in a partially formed Secular Franciscan. The challenge, of course, comes from the fact that the total number of hours dedicated to the formal process typically amounts to only several hours per month. From this, we expect that the newly professed will have all the spiritual maturity and wisdom necessary to begin their journey. They also are expected to realize that they have just begun a life-long learning process. From that initial formation must come the desire and resolve to continue to develop their Secular Franciscan vocation as a "way of life." Contrast this to the process used in religious orders, namely, that of a multi-year, 24-hour a day, immersion process.

Recently, the scope of the formation process has been increased; something new has been added. In 1992, the International Fraternity

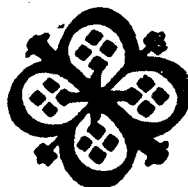
issued a supplemental document to enrich the original "GUIDELINES FOR FORMATION." One of the concepts included in the new document is that the initial formation period aims at leading the candidate to full maturity in three dimensions: the human, the Christian, and the Franciscan. So now formation is not to be just concerned with "Franciscan formation" but with a more holistic process involving the entire person. This makes a great deal of sense for, without the basic forming of the person and his/her human and Christian nature, Franciscan formation could be just a veneer over a defective base and result in the reception of candidates really not suitable for the Order. When this happens, an injustice has been done to the person and a disservice to the Order.

The end result is that we can expect the initial formation process of the future to require more lapsed time, to be more holistic and experiential in nature, and to be done in larger groups with better trained formation teams. There will be increased emphasis on the global nature of the Order and on developing a sense of unity of vision and identity.

I ask each of you to take a greater interest in continuing your own formation through the study of scripture, the Rule, Constitutions, other readings, and, as importantly, your life experiences of working in the Lord's vineyard.

Fraternally,

Richard Morton, SFO
National Minister



HAPPENINGS

Rocky Mountain Franciscan Gathering

4210 Meadowlark Lane SE

Rio Rancho, New Mexico 87124

The 10th Rocky Mountain Franciscan Gathering

will be held September 30-October 1, 1994

at Holy Family Parish Hall in Albuquerque.

Carol Gentile, Chair National SFO Family Life Commission
will speak on FAMILY AND FRANCISCAN VALUES.

SFO NETWORKING CORNER

Secular Franciscans have shown great interest in Networking according to Mary Mazotti. In response to your interest, a NETWORKING CORNER will become a feature of The Newsletter. Thanks for your response and for your patience as facilitators are identified for this Franciscan connection.

Networking is a 1990s concept for building resource communities within interest groups to increase knowledge and potential of the participants. Advantages of networking as Secular Franciscans includes the opportunity to explore a profession or area of interest from a Franciscan viewpoint.

The National Fraternity is gathering names of Secular Franciscans interested in participating in networking with Seculars of similar professions or similar interests. Possible networking areas include: lawyers, medical professionals, SFO Deacons, SFO diocesan clergy, chaplains, writers, youth workers, Christianity doctrine/theology, Catholic culture/tradition, computers and any others you may suggest.

*If you are interested in belonging to or assisting in developing this kind of networking, please contact: Mary K. Mazotti, SFO
National First Vice Minister
P. O. Box 2571
Arnold, CA 95223-2571
(209) 795-3809*

"CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT OF PEACE"

Ohio-Indiana-Kentucky Franciscans will gather in Oldenburg, Indiana,

9 a.m. -5 p.m.

on Saturday, October 15, 1994

to discuss Franciscans International, the Franciscan non-governmental organization at the United Nations.

Presenters include:

Kevin Smith, OSF, Exec. Dir. Franciscans Int'l.
Rachel West, OSF, Dir. Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation for Sisters of St. Francis of Oldenburg

Cost: \$15 includes lunch; \$20 after 9/19

Contact: Claire Whalen, OSF, Michaela Farm, Oldenburg, IN 47036

Phone: (812) 934-5016 or 933-0661

FAX (812) 933-6403

A similar gathering is planned for the Michigan-Ohio-Indiana tri-state October 22
Sylvania, OH

Contact: Rosine Sobczak, OSF

6832 Convent Boulevard

Sylvania, OH 43560

Phone: (419) 885-3211 or 883-2016

FRANCISCAN PILGRIMAGE TO CENTRAL AMERICA

March 5-26, 1995

2 weeks in Guatemala, 1 week in El Salvador

Celebrate anniversary of death
of Archbishop Romero

Contact: Ed Dunn, OFM

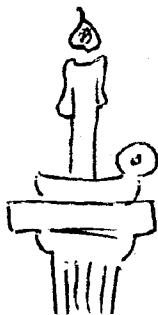
1112 26th Street

Sacramento, CA 95816

Cost: \$1400

(916) 443-8084 or (510) 536-3722

The Lampstand



"You do not light a lamp and put it under a bushel basket. You set it on a stand where it gives light to all the house. In the same way your light must shine before others so they may see your goodness and give praise to your heavenly Father." (Matthew 5:15-16)

Editor's Note: Marie Amore suggested that "The Lampstand" as a column in The National Newsletter. This space is reserved to tell the stories of Secular Franciscans who live Gospel to life and life to the Gospel. We need you, our readers, to write articles about those special Secular Franciscans you know. Send articles (under 350 words) to:

Patti Normile, Newsletter Editor
609 Amherst Avenue
Terrace Park, OH 45174
FAX 513/831-2804.

Franciscan Family Apostolate

Individuals or fraternities interested in supporting a family in India through the Franciscan Family Apostolate (see The National Newsletter, Fall, 1993), may receive information by filling out and returning the following request to:

Alan Ouimet, SFO
Franciscan Family Apostolate
303 Church Street
Guilford, Ct. 06437

Dear Alan: Please send me information on joining the Franciscan Family Apostolate.

Name _____

Fraternity _____

Address _____

KNOW YOUR NATIONAL SFO OFFICERS

RICHARD MORTON, MINISTER

3191 71st Street East

Inver Grove Heights, MN 55076

MARY K. MAZOTTI, 1st VICE MINISTER

P. O. Box 2571

Arnold, CA 95223

GERALDINE ROME, VICE MINISTER

12266 N. Lakeview Drive

Baton Rouge, LA 70810

RONALD PIHOKKER, VICE MINISTER

377 Rutherford Blvd.

Clifton, NJ 07014

WILLIAM WICKS, SECRETARY

3307 Quail Meadows Drive

Santa Maria, CA 93455

JOHN SANBORN, TREASURER

1611 W. River Parkway

Grand Island, NY 14072

REV. CAMILLUS MAC RORY, OFM Cap,
SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT

1345 Cortez Avenue

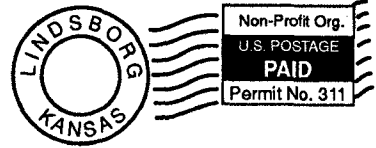
Burlingame, CA 94010

*Congratulations to the Secular Franciscans of
Loving Stones Fraternity
which received its canonical establishment
Monday, August 22, 1994,
at Immaculate Conception Church,
Rapid City, South Dakota*

St. Francis has an 800 number!

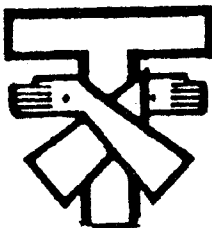
**Those seeking information about becoming
Secular Franciscans may call 1-800 FRANCIS
(372-6247).**

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NATIONAL FRATERNITY
SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER
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LINDSBORG, KS 67456-0364



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NEWSLETTER
The National Fraternity
Secular Franciscan Order
c/o Dolores Smelko, SFO
RD 1, Box 155
Anita, PA 15711
+++++

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