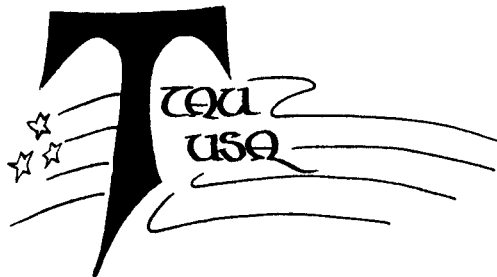


TAU-USA

THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER



Issue Number 12

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL FRATERNITY

Summer, 1996

Expectations of the National Minister for Local Fraternity Ministers

by Richard Morton, SFO, National Minister

The office of minister of the local fraternity is of primary importance to the life of the SFO as a whole. I believe that the fulfillment of the expectations I have of these ministers is of critical importance if the Order is to fulfill its destiny. The expectations I propose can be divided into two separate categories: administrative, reflecting the requirements as expressed in the Rule and Constitutions; and behavior characteristics related to knowledge, skills and abilities needed to build a strong, viable community.

The primary expectation I have of local fraternity ministers is that they fulfill their obligation to be co-responsible, along with the council, for animating and guiding the fraternity as outlined in Article XXI of the Rule and that they do this to the best of their ability. Articles 31-32, 37, 39, 41-42, 49, 51-52, 55-58, 78-79, 81-84 and 93-94 of the Constitutions pertain to the local fraternity minister. I suggest that each of us review these articles to refresh our memories and to obtain new insights as to what is expected of the minister. Notice that the minister is not to be the one solely responsible for animating and guiding the fraternity. S/he is to be supported by the council and every member of the community.

In addition to anticipating the fulfillment of the directives contained in the Rule and Constitutions, other expectations are important if the fraternity is to have a vibrant, dynamic fraternal life. Because I cannot elaborate on each of them in detail, I invite you, the readers, to submit articles on this topic to Patti Normile, TAU-USA editor.

First, and perhaps foremost, the fraternity minister must be an example of a servant leader (for an excellent discussion on servant leadership, read Servant Leadership, Robert K. Greenleaf, Paulist Press, 1977). As a servant leader, the minister seeks no power, does not seek to control the fraternity or any individual member. Other expectations that come to mind are listed below in no particular order of priority.

The minister must be a peacemaker and a conciliator. As Franciscans, we are to be models of a peaceful people who are able to get along with each other. If we are not able to do this, we cannot expect anyone else to be able to do so. When operating within a consensus model of leadership, the minister insures that the group is not divided into "winners and losers." Thus, the fraternity maintains a sense of unity.

A heartfelt concern for the integrity of the Order coupled with not imposing the minister's own personal, private practices of piety on the fraternity members is of critical importance. This will become even more important as the number of spiritual assistants continues to decrease.

- Additional expectations include:
- being a mentor to train future leaders in the fraternity,
 - being a good listener,
 - knowing how to conduct a meeting,
 - being able to be heard and understood by everyone when speaking,
 - having no personal agenda other than being of service to the fraternity,
 - participating and insuring participation in activities of the higher levels of fraternity,
 - being a reader of materials that enrich personal and fraternal life,
 - being able to help form and articulate a vision for the fraternity,
 - being willing to learn,
 - possessing a desire to improve oneself.

Because of the challenges and responsibilities involved with serving as a local fraternity minister, each member of the community has a responsibility to support, encourage and to pray for their minister in meaningful ways.

READ - CHECK - AND PASS TAU-USA ALONG:	
___ Minister	___ Vice Minister
___ Secretary	___ Treasurer
___ Formation	___ Councilors
___ Family	___ Work
___ Ecology	___ Peace & Justice

In this issue:	
+Questions Asked the Treasurer	+Bishops' Policy
+Happenings	+Networking Corner
+The Lampstand	+Disagreeing in an Agreeable Manner
+Youth Activities	+SFO Bookshelf
+Prayer for the Congress	+For the Good of the Order

Leaders Need Perspective

by Jerome Friga, SFO, NAFRA Councilor

Leadership, by its very nature, requires some degree of clarity with regard to the aims to be achieved. Yet, it is easy to lose perspective as we go about the routine of daily life. If we lose sight of the Secular Franciscan vision, our fraternal life can deteriorate to the point that it is difficult to distinguish our fraternity meetings from other "organizations." Reflecting on the basics can help us regain the perspective we need.

The opening sentence of the prologue to our Rule provides us with Francis of Assisi's perspective of what we penitents seek. "All who love the Lord with their whole heart, with their whole soul and mind, with all their strength, and love their neighbors as themselves and hate their bodies with their vices and sins, and receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and produce worthy fruits of penance..." These are the basics. To help one another prepare to receive these blessings of the penitential life, we bond together in fraternity. It is a description of the vision toward which our ministers and fraternity councils should be leading.

Recently Franciscan scholars have described in modern language points made by Francis: love God, love our neighbor, resist the sinful tendencies of our fallen nature, partake of the Body of Christ, and act/live in conformity with our conversion.

Leaders always move toward a vision of what is to come. The distinguishing feature of Secular Franciscan Servant Leaders is our penitential aim. If we stray from our origins we may well risk losing our identity and perhaps our usefulness to the Church and to the world. If we keep our perspective, we can accomplish our organizational responsibilities and remain true to our purpose.



We received a superabundance of material for this issue of TAU-USA. If your article did not appear, we will attempt to include it in a future issue. Time sensitive items are published first. Many thanks for your contributions.

McIntosh Heads Peace & Justice

Jim McIntosh, SFO, from Washington, D. C. has been named by the NAFRA Executive Council to chair the Peace and Justice Commission. He assumes responsibility for the commission immediately.

Jim has guided Franciscans around the world into the computer age with his knowledge of computer networking. In August, 1995, he gave a presentation on computer networking to the OFM International Council of Peace, Justice and the Integrity of Creation in Seoul, Korea. He journeyed to Seoul via Hiroshima and Nagasaki. meeting.

While in Japan, Jim joined a small group of Franciscans who prayed at the Peace Park in Hiroshima at the precise time that recalled the dropping of the first atomic bomb fifty years earlier. In Nagasaki the group visited the shrine of the 26 martyrs--including many Franciscans--who were killed by the Shogun in 1597. While celebrating Mass in the shrine chapel, they heard the tolling of the peace bells commemorating the moment fifty years earlier when the bomb exploded over the Catholic Cathedral in Nagasaki. Jim remembers that the group was saying the Agnus Dei at the moment the bells rang.

Jim can be reached by e-mail: jim@american.edu, or at 420 7th St., NW #1009, Washington, DC 20004-2115.

A First!

The first Quad-Regional Conference of Secular Franciscans gathered at Bergamo Center, Dayton, Ohio, July 19-21, to consider the call to refound the Order in accord with the founding story of Francis of Assisi. Participating regions included Holy Trinity, Lady Poverty, Maximilian Kolbe, Our Lady of Indiana.

Sr. Brenda Hermann, MSTB, keynoted the gathering with her talk "Out of Chaos--Refounding Religious Orders." Sr. Brenda collaborates with Father Gerald Arbuckle, SM, author of Out of Chaos, in working with refounding religious congregations. Other speakers included Sr. Christa Thompson, OSF, who guided participants to explore the origins of Franciscan life as they might be translated into the lives of the laity in the 1990s. Richard Morton, National Minister; Jerome and Marilyn Friga, SFOs; also led the Seculars in considering the refounding process. A series of workshops on spirituality, leadership and formation on 20 individual topics were conducted by various presenters.

This Quad-Regional gathering offered a glimpse of the dynamic potential of the Secular Franciscan Order that will be explored at the Quinquennial Congress, July 15-20, 1997, at the University of Delaware, Newark, DE.



Youth Group Flourishes

A group of youth following Franciscan ideals has flourished at Padua High School, Parma, OH, since 1991. This group developed from a master's thesis by Br. Thom Smith, OFM, campus minister. Seeing the school's many service-oriented projects, Brother Thom worked Franciscanism into these functions. Twelve students of diverse interests and grade-levels were the first recruits. The number has increased to nearly 40 members each school year. Brother Thom emphasized that this is not another youth group but a way of life. To formulate this way of life a simplified version of the Secular Franciscan Rule was written by Fr. Benet Fonck, OFM. The rule maintains the substance and spirit of the Secular Franciscan Rule, giving youth a code to live by until they are ready and reach an age to begin formation into the Order. In 1995, Fr. Dan Senger, OFM, replaced Br. Thom as campus minister.

Each school year students are recruited from the student body. Those interested complete an application and respond to questions about why they wish to follow Francis and the meaning of the message of St. Francis of Assisi today. Monthly meetings combine prayer, reflections, sharing, singing and audio-visuals. Extra activities included sharing meetings with local Secular Franciscan fraternities, Christmas caroling and a Spring prom at a local nursing home. On Memorial Day weekend the group holds an overnight retreat inviting its graduate members. The final activity of the year is the "Rite of Promise Ceremony." Family and friends of candidates are invited. Each candidate promises to live the Gospel in the light of the message of St. Francis of Assisi. With the acceptance of this promise, a TAU cross is presented to the candidate.

As these young individuals live their rule in the Franciscan environment of Padua Franciscan High School, there is the hope that they will join the next generation of Secular Franciscans.

*Marcella Bina, SFO, Minister
St. Maximilian Kolbe Region*

SFO NATIONAL FRANCISCAN YOUTH COMMISSION

I am interested in starting a Franciscan Youth Group. Send ideas!

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Region _____

Mail to: Anthony and Mary Mazotti, SFO, Co-Chairs
National Franciscan Youth Commission
P. O. Box 2571, Arnold, CA 95223-2571



TAU Fraternity Works with Children

TAU Fraternity, Herndon, VA, established in 1992 with 18 active members, serves area youth. Meeting at St. Joseph Catholic School, TAU adopted ecology, peace and justice apostolates to serve children in the community and District of Columbia. A member was awarded the Justin D. McClunn Society Award for contributions to Catholic schools in the Diocese of Arlington.

TAU's ecology apostolate sponsors "Kids For Saving the Earth" Clubs at St. Joseph Catholic School in which members teach kindergartners about St. Francis and ecology--recycling, endangered animals and rain forests. Woodsy the Owl visits to lead songs. Letters with ecology projects for parents/children are sent home. Children sponsor a Creation Day Mass honoring Earth Day in April plus a penny drive to help save rain forests in Central America.

TAU's peace and justice apostolate helps children and parents entering St. Joseph's School for the first time to adjust. New families are paired with families with children in their classes. When the school doubled in size, over 100 families were paired. Members held home parties for classes with many new families and too few sponsors.

Active TAU members are required to have two individual apostolates in addition to fraternity apostolates. Some small projects grow when others contribute. This is especially true of the "collection apostolates". Members collect pop tops from aluminum drink cans to be recycled. Proceeds are sent to a local children's hospital. Others collect baby clothes and blankets for Birthright. Socks are collected for children arriving from Central America in winter without warm clothing. Members collect used books for a new Catholic school's library. Collection apostolates are supported by members and children of St. Joseph School.

Members teach CCD, tutor children at home. Two members work with Catholic youth groups. The Minister participates in school retreats. Several members have apostolates at other schools. TAU's Minister represents St. Joseph School in the "Green School" program, schools promoting environmental projects. St. Joseph School is the only Catholic school member largely because of environmental projects, such as recycling classroom paper, initiated by TAU. When members heard that District of Columbia schools could not afford school supplies such as pencils and crayons, they began to recycle used school supplies from local Catholic schools. Two Catholic schools donated new books and workbooks in addition to recycled supplies.

After attending TAU's Day of Recollection led by Father Joe Rozensky, OFM, on ways Franciscans can help children, members became aware of child abuse in other countries. Members began to research which businesses sell clothing made by children under harsh conditions. It will conclude with a letter writing campaign.

TAU Fraternity members sponsor the popular Blessing of the Animals in October attended by many children and pets.

*by Sally Stratmoen, SFO
Tau Fraternity*



"Let Prayer and Contemplation Be the Soul of All They Are and Do"

By Teresa Baker, SFO, National Formation Commission Member



As in any relationship, communication is vital. So it is in the life of prayer of every Secular Franciscan. First and foremost, the very life of a Secular Franciscan begins with a call, a vocation, from God. Thus we are invited to a deeper relationship. It is answered in various ways, but one that can never be overlooked, forgotten or downplayed is that of prayer. Before all else as Secular Franciscans we are called to be persons of prayer--persons with minds and hearts set on the things of God working to accomplish them in this world.

Prayer, communal, private or liturgical, is the lifeline of Secular Franciscans. It provides the spiritual energy needed to carry us through the tasks of everyday life. Article 8 of our Rule reminds us that prayer and contemplation are the basis of all that we are and do as Secular Franciscans. Prayer is a required part of the Secular Franciscan's life with God. How many professed members recall the many prayer forms prescribed in the Rule, Constitutions and Ritual? How many of us know how to pray them, or if we do, choose to pray them? Are we too stuck in our own prayer routine to try something new? Does it look too hard? Can we not find anyone to teach us? This ongoing formation can take place at a fraternity meeting or in the privacy of home.

In researching these articles, I found how richly blessed we are in varied prayer forms. Six different prayer forms are mentioned in our Rule in seven different articles: the Liturgy of the Hours or Christian Prayer (Articles 5,8), the reading of the Scriptures (Articles 4,5,11), the art of contemplation (Article 8), the Liturgy and sacramental life of the Church (Articles 5,6,7,8), the imitation of the holy lives of others who have gone before us (Articles 4,9,10). Prayer is mentioned sixteen times in the Constitutions, an expansion of forms mentioned in the Rule. In the Constitutions, we are given specific ways to evangelize our Gospel life, from sharing it with family members to taking on the hard blessings of the Beatitudes as part of our daily living. The Ritual is our official prayer book.

Look through the Constitutions and find a new form of putting prayer into action. Next issue, we will look at the Liturgy of the Hours or Christian Prayer, the official prayer form of the Church. Then we will look into *Lectio Divina*, an ancient prayer form used in the Church.

Ed Zablocki contributed an excellent article on contemplation in Winter, 1996, TAU-USA. Finding and rereading it will be an excellent way to begin looking into our life of prayer. Happy Praying!

From *Dignitas* published by the National Work Commission: "Because it is grace, work is never task oriented but person oriented. The Franciscan doctor doesn't cure disease, she heals patients; the Franciscan professor doesn't teach theology, he teaches students. The Franciscan cook doesn't prepare meals, he feeds people. The good news is the news that flesh and blood--precisely in its sinfulness and hurt--matter to God. Sinful flesh and blood is worthy of the self-emptying of God. Work is an expression of that redemptive love which embraces the whole of a scarred, imperfect yet wonderfully graced creation." by Fr. Daniel McLellan, OFM



Franciscan Mission Service Moves Closer to Goal

Joseph Nangle, OFM, Executive Director of Franciscan Mission Service, announces the appointment of a Secular Franciscan to the Board of FMS. Fr. Nangle is convinced that this is a step toward realizing his dream of one day turning over FMS to the Secular Franciscan Order for governing. He also hopes the appointment will be an encouragement for Seculars to consider joining the ranks of the overseas missionaries of FMS.

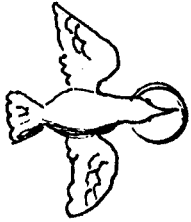
Newly appointed to the Board of Directors is Kimberly J. Burgo, SFO, St. Joseph Cupertino fraternity, Ellicott City, MD, St. Margaret of Cortona Region. For six years Kim has been employed by Catholic Relief Services as Coordinator of Church Affairs. She is the liaison with CRS Diocesan Directors in all U.S. Catholic Dioceses, keeping them informed on international relief and development and CRS activities.

Prior to joining CRS, Kim worked at the worldwide headquarters for Save the Children Federation serving as Assistant to the Director in the Crafts Program. She traveled to the West Bank and Jordan to observe crafts programs associated with villages, communities and women's cooperatives in the region.

For information about joining or supporting FMS mission programs contact: Franciscan Mission Service
P. O. Box 29034
Washington, DC 20017
202/832-1778

**The Secular Franciscans of
Divine Mercy Fraternity
announce their Canonical Establishment
Sunday, June 9, 1996
St. Helen Church
Vero Beach, Florida**

QUINQUENNIAL CONGRESS PRAYER II



*We lift up our hearts to you, O Lord.
Hear us and let our prayers rise before you like incense.
Eternal God, as we enter our advent season
of planning for our Quinquennial Congress,
never let us forget that it is your Spirit
that goes before us to show us the way.*

*Mindful of this, O Lord,
give us the courage to do your will
and not to count the cost.*

*We pray for all those
who will serve your people during this Congress.
In a special way bless the unnoticed
and often unappreciated "Marthas"
without whose help we would surely fail.*

*Shower us with your grace and your love
and entice us into never-ending conversion,
so that with pure hearts and steadfast spirits
we may embrace the original vision of Saint Francis of Assisi.*

*God of Deborah, Judith and Esther,
you have walked with your people in the past,
strengthen us, O Lord, and give us courage
that we may be worthy of the vocation and mission
you have entrusted to us.*

*We ask your blessing upon us, our Congress and our Order
in the name of the Father
and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.*



(The Congress Planning Committee hopes all Secular Franciscans will be involved in planning the Congress through this prayer.)

***Are you planning to attend the 1997 Quinquennial SFO Congress?
Mark your calendars--July 15-20. The place--University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware.***

Education: Bishops' Public Policy Agenda

by Susan Burke, SFO

Fraternity Ministers: Please duplicate and make this article available to your members.

Mary Lahiff believed that for Secular Franciscans, the words "from Gospel to life and life to the Gospel" are a commitment to more than just talking about living the Gospel. She believed those words call us to concrete action where it will be effective, especially in the seat of power known as the political arena, on every level of government--local, state, federal. In the tradition of Francis, she also believed in acting in concert with the Church and its leadership, specifically the bishops of the United States. It isn't always easy to find out what the bishops are thinking, not because they don't publicize their views, but because those views aren't routinely presented on the evening news or in the local paper or even from the pulpit.

So Mary conceived the idea of a regular feature in this newsletter, summarizing the many announcements and updates that flow regularly from the United States Catholic Conference (USCC). The Bishops also believe in concrete action and their office in Washington issues regular bulletins to inform Catholic dioceses, parishes and other organizations on the issues at hand and where they stand on them. Their stand is often radical in the eyes of the world, but so is the Gospel and so was Francis. Our call is to be radical as well in the sense of returning to our roots, of living by the formative principles of our Christian and Franciscan charism.

Mary died in June after a brief illness. (See p. 10.) As I take over this task, I will miss her enthusiasm and guiding hand.

* * * * *

Election Action

This is an election year when candidates at all levels will be especially sensitive to the desires of their constituents. Therefore, it is especially important to express your views to both the incumbents and the challengers. It is important to find out the positions of your representatives and the candidates. There are several ways to do this:

Questionnaire--The USCC has issued a model Congressional Questionnaire covering topics such as: Arms Trade and Land Mines, Economic Help for Families, the Environment, Human Rights. This will be sent to your congressmen. Copies can be obtained by calling the Department of Social Development and World Peace, 202/541-3280.

Candidates' Forum--Because of Internal Revenue Service law governing nonprofit organizations, candidate forums must be scrupulously nonpartisan like all church political-responsibilities activities. That means:

- 1) treat all candidates alike;
- 2) do not intervene, directly or indirectly, on behalf of a particular candidate or party;
- 3) cover a broad range of issues to avoid focusing on one issue which can be interpreted as endorsement of a candidate or issue.

Other Actions

--Distribute or print the text of the Bishops' Statement on Political Responsibility.

--Distribute or print results of the USCC Presidential Questionnaire to be available in the fall by calling 202/541-3280.

--Distribute or print information on local registration and voting procedures.

A reminder: Make your opinions known on an individual basis rather than expressing them in a way that would indicate that you are speaking on behalf of the entire Secular Franciscan Order.

Political Responsibility

The Bishops published their statement titled *Political Responsibility* in 1995 (\$1.75). Subtitled "Proclaiming the Gospel of Life, Proclaiming the Gospel of Life, Protecting the Least Among Us, and Pursuing the Common Good," it discusses the individual Catholic's role as a responsible citizen and voter and the role of the Church

in public life. It includes the Church's position on issues such as abortion, capital punishment, education, euthanasia, family life, human rights, the environment, immigration, and mass media. Also available is a leaflet containing excerpts from *Political Responsibility* (\$.35) and a companion video (\$14.95). For information on bulk prices, call toll-free 800/235-8722 or send order to USCC Publishing Services, 3211 Fourth St. NE, Washington, DC 20017-1194.

In light of the political maneuvering taking place in Washington in preparation for the election--where human dignity may take a back seat to political advantage--John Carr of the USCC says, "The message of the bishops' political responsibility statement is more urgent than ever. It calls the Church to principled, consistent and nonpartisan action to defend human life, to work for justice and to pursue peace....When others seek to reduce the Gospel and Church teaching to election tactics, we must work for genuine political responsibility."

Welfare Reform

The House of Representatives passed a welfare reform bill in July that will cut \$53 billion from the welfare budget over the next six years and put an end to entitlement to aid for dependent children. John Carr, representing the USCC at an interdenominational press conference protesting the severity of this bill (which one analyst estimated would mean one million *more* children would go to bed hungry each night) said, "This is more about the needs of politicians than the needs of the poor." The coalition of Catholic, Protestant and Jewish activists pledged to continue work against the enactment of this bill, asking the President to veto it if it passes the Senate in its present form. These spokesmen on the front lines need the support of voters who will write to their congressmen expressing their views.

Foreign Aid

Last year, Congress appropriated \$12.1 billion for the Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill, 11% less than the year before. Of that amount, nearly half went to Israel and Egypt for economic and security assistance, a third to development and humanitarian assistance, the rest to export promotion, foreign military programs, anti-narcotics and anti-terrorism. Development and humanitarian assistance programs were cut by 25% to 60%. Even so, according to the Secretary of the Treasury, the president of the World Bank and congressional staffers, Catholics were instrumental in easing cuts to those programs.

To work against such deep cuts in the upcoming budget, the Bishops ask you to meet with your representative or senator in their home office to let them know that we believe the United States has a moral obligation to help alleviate poverty in the Third World. This is our message:

- We are deeply concerned about last year's cuts in development and humanitarian assistance in the foreign assistance bill.
- We believe that highest priority should be given to programs that help eradicate hunger and poverty through sustainable, people-centered development. We believe that development assistance should support countries in transition to democracy and peace and should provide humanitarian relief in emergencies.
- We urge you to approve the President's request level for the International Development Association, the Inter-American Foundation and United Nations organizations and programs.

Follow up with a letter to the member and a phone call to the member's legislative aide on foreign assistance.

Conference Worth Noting

"Build the City of God!" the sixth annual Urban Ministry Conference, will be held at the Milwaukee Hilton in Milwaukee, WI, October 17-19, 1996. This conference is for anyone working for or interested in the Church in the city. Speakers will include: Archbishop Rembert Weakland of Milwaukee and Ernie Cortes. Workshops include: Clustering, Racism, Youth, Urban/Suburban Linkages, Models of Religious Education, Economic Development. For information, write or call Donna L. Ciangio, OP, Urban Ministry Network, National Pastoral Life Center, 18 Bleecker St., New York, NY 10012-2404; phone 212/431-7825.

Disagreeing in an Agreeable Manner from a Franciscan Perspective

by David-Marion Ream, SFO

As Franciscans we have been called to be incarnational signs of the reality that the Reign of God is already present in our world today, even though not yet fully present. Our example of Gospel-animated living after the manner of Saints Clare and Francis is intended to help bring this Reign of God to a fuller expression. Yet we know that interpersonal conflicts and disagreements are part and parcel of our everyday human experience and they call for a response. The wisdom of the world often claims that "might makes right" and the more powerful is the one who prevails. As Franciscans, however, we maintain that there is a way of responding to conflict and disagreement which has a more decidedly Franciscan character to it. This brief article seeks to share at least some of the elements of a Franciscan response with the hope of inspiring the reader's personal reflection.

Part of our response to "follow[ing] Christ in the footsteps of Saint Francis of Assisi" (Rule, Article 1) is found in our efforts to live out the ideals and aspirations expressed in the *Rule of Life* which the Church has entrusted to us. We Secular Franciscans are exhorted to "strive for perfect charity" (Rule, Article 2). Elsewhere in the Rule (Article 13) we are reminded that "As the Father sees in every person the features of his Son, the firstborn of many brothers and sisters, so the Secular Franciscan *with a gentle and courteous spirit* [emphasis added] accept all people as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ." In every circumstance of our lives we are challenged to be peacemakers: "Mindful that they [Secular Franciscans] are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly, they should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon" (Rule, Article 19).

These references to our Rule suggest some fundamental attitudes and behaviors which should inform our Franciscan response to conflict and disagreement. In striving for perfect charity we remember that God is love and that our Lord is present in every moment of every interaction we have with others. Stopping to ask ourselves the question, "How would Jesus respond to this person at this moment?" can help us temper our words and express our points of view in a truly charitable, Christ-like manner. What reverence and respect we would have for others if we could cultivate in ourselves the ability to be like the Father in seeing in *every* person the features of Jesus! Notice that it is not sufficient to see Jesus just in those persons who agree with us in their thoughts and viewpoints, but in *everyone*.

We are given some insight about *how* we Franciscans are to respond to others in the words "with a gentle and courteous spirit." In our society gentleness is often mistaken for weakness or lack of assertiveness, yet Jesus himself invited us to "learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart" (Matthew 11:29). In the time of Saint Francis, courtesy was regarded as one of those chivalrous virtues which our Seraphic Father never failed to practice in all his interactions with others. Assertiveness in communication, including the expression of disagreement or a different point of view, always respects the rights and dignity of the other person while recognizing that we are also worthy of respect and are entitled to see things differently. Aggressiveness and harshness in responding to others seem very contrary to the spirit of the Gospel and to the spirit of our Rule. We are called to *accept* all persons, not merely tolerate or put up with them, "as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ." If this be true of our relationships with all people in general, how much more immediate is the need for us sincerely to accept our sisters and brothers with whom we share our Franciscan vocation in fraternity.

Jesus promised peacemakers a special blessing and kinship with God (cf. Matthew 5:9). Although not authored by Saint Francis, the famous Peace Prayer commonly attributed to him certainly reflects his--and our--aspiration: "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace." For most of us the opportunities for Franciscan peacemaking occur not on a grand, global scale, but in our daily interactions with friends, family members, coworkers and members of our local fraternity. We might do well to keep this question in the forefront of our minds, especially when a conflictual or contentious issue emerges: "What can I do in this specific instance to help foster that 'unity and fraternal harmony' to which we Franciscans have been called?"

Our Rule wisely points to the need for dialogue as a means for resolving conflict and strengthening unity. Genuine dialogue is possible only when one person listens while the other person speaks. To appreciate the full value of another person's message, we must first make a conscious effort to suspend judgment and our preconceptions which might serve to filter or color our listening. Our attention needs to be focused as completely as possible on what the person is saying rather than on formulating our own response. Only after the other person has finished stating a position or a point of view and only after we make certain that we have accurately understood this message should we offer our response. The other person then owes us the respect and courtesy of listening fully to what we have to say. This pattern of interacting would

seem to be the Christian and Franciscan way of conducting a genuine dialogue. Many more suggestions about conflict management, reconciling differences, listening and responding skills and communication can be found in the *Handbook for Secular Franciscan Servant Leaders*, a 1994 publication prepared under the aegis of the National Formation Commission and available from Barbo-Carlson Publishers, Lindsborg, Kansas [address on back of this newsletter].

We conclude our reflections on disagreeing in an agreeable manner from a Franciscan perspective by making reference to some words which our holy father Francis is reported to have addressed to the brothers--and to us--during a Chapter of Mats at Saint Mary of the Angels: "since you speak of peace, all the more so must you have it in your hearts. Let no one be provoked to anger or scandal by you, but rather may they be drawn to peace and good will, to benignity and concord through your gentleness. We have been called to heal wounds, to unite what has fallen apart, and to bring home those who have lost their way. Many who may seem to us to be children of the Devil will still become Christ's disciples" (*Legend of the Three Companions*, par. 58).

* * * * *

THE MEANING OF DIALOGUE

(Excerpts from "*Secular Franciscans: Evangelizers of the Culture*" Fr. Matt Gaskin, OFM)

*"Modern Man listens more willingly to listen to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses." (Pope Paul VI, Council for the Laity, 1974)

*True dialogue happens only when persons listen to each other in a climate of mutual truthfulness and love as they share their feelings and personal experience.

*St. Paul spoke of dialogue when he wrote: "By speaking the truth in a spirit of love, we must grow up in every way to Christ, who is the head...Everyone must tell the truth to his brother because we are all members together in the body of Christ (Eph.4:15-25)."

*Dialogue is the serious address and response between two or more persons in which the being and truth of each is confronted by the being and truth of the other. It is an exchange wherein there is a flow of meaning between them in spite of human obstacles that would block communication. (Reuel Howe, *The Miracle of Dialogue*)

*Dialogue and discussion differ. Discussion attempts to rationalize a conversation between persons. It is intent on making a point, separating mentally, examining in detail, fortifying with facts, debating, investigating and sifting. Discussion easily becomes competitive, motivated by concern for one's own view of truth. It attempts to impose its opinion on the other. It can become argumentative. Dialogue is intent on truthfulness which amounts to the communication of life between persons. It is an interpersonal exchange of lived experience, the sharing of feelings and personal reflections with mutual openness, reverence and respect.

*Dialogue is true witnessing. It must also be a listening process. To listen in love means active, creative listening that unites persons in community. Active listening is more than just "hearing" words spoken by another. It is listening to the whole person: the feelings, emotions, expressions, eye contact, body language and silence. It is listening to the meaning of the heart of another, not just ideas and opinions. Active listening fosters mutual growth, calls one another into being, satisfies the need to be heard, helps each to listen to one's self and clarify one's perspectives. Active listening calls for and calls forth a change of heart.

*Dialogue requires two indispensable attitudes: humility and mutual good will.

*In dialogue there is a movement away from self protection and fear into shared light, life and love.

*Dialogue redeems brokenness, alienation, suspicion and prejudice among participants.

*Generally persons settle for monologue. It is safe, concerned only with one's ego and view of reality. Others exist to serve and confirm the monologist's ego. In monologue the speaker is so preoccupied that the other is seen as a captive audience for the speaker. The monologist is a bore who is "me-deep" in conversation.

*Secular Franciscans are called to be witnesses/dialoguers like St. Francis of Assisi.

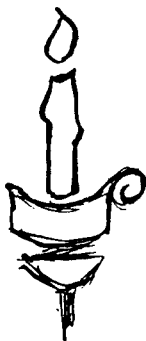
*Guidelines for dialogue:

- be totally present to each other;
- keep some distance between participants;
- do not smother each other;
- be free of exploitative appropriation and domination of the other;
- be careful never to lecture, moralize or censure the other;
- by-pass "roles" and make contact with the real person.



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)



Mary Lahiff, one who enjoyed daily Mass for over 70 years, was a professed Secular Franciscan for 49 years. She wrote, "In looking at Francis of Assisi, I see someone madly in love with the person of Jesus who strove to become like Him in minutest detail." That statement also describes Mary. Mary came to the "Third Order" as a result of Scripture study and prayer which led her to seek a deeper relationship with Jesus. The Liturgy of the Hours was treasured prayer for her, but her passion was putting her prayer life into action--helping the poor and working with the Legion of Mary.

After retirement as an executive secretary in Cleveland, Ohio, Mary sought new ways to spread the Good News. She had desired to be a foreign missionary early in life but said, "Undoubtedly God wanted something else from me." A few years ago she approached National Minister Richard Morton asking him, "What can a little old lady like me do for the Secular Franciscan Order?" Richard found a perfect place for Mary in the Order as chair of Evangelization 2000, a position in which she gathered and disseminated to SFO members the messages of the Bishops of the U.S.A. in her column in this newsletter. She said, "I feel free to try to bring Christ's mission into the world, whether in the neighborhood or in society at large."

A few months ago Mary acknowledged that it was time for her to have some assistance in this job. Her final column appeared in the Spring, 1996 TAU-USA. Mary must have sensed changes occurring in her life because in June she suffered a massive cerebral hemorrhage and died at on June 28.

Mary leaves us with her thought: "Today's world rejects Jesus, openingly mocks his teachings especially in the media--and we have allowed it to happen because we are afraid to open our mouths and speak up." Mary was not afraid to open her mouth about injustice. She has now found her reward for her courageous Christianity.

Editor's Note: Marie Amore suggested the "The Lampstand" as a way to tell the stories of Secular Franciscans who live Gospel to life and life to the Gospel. Tell about a Secular you know. Send articles to:

Patti Normile, TAU-USA Editor,
609 Amherst Ave., Terrace Park, OH 45174.
Fax: 513/831-7542

SFO BOOKSHELF.....



Elohim: A Search for a Symbol of Human Fulfillment

Joan Schaupp, SFO, International Scholars Publications, 1995. To order: Manna Institute, Box 19009, Green Bay, WI 54307.

Secular Franciscan Joan Schaupp, author of an earlier work, Woman: Image of the Holy Spirit, has devoted years of research in Hebrew and Jungian studies in search of an archetype of the divine that speaks to both the female and male fulfillment. Her search for images of God as mother, womb and Wisdom has unveiled Elohim, a feminine-gender noun referring to the Hebrew Scripture's God, as the symbol uniting masculine and feminine. Encouraged in her search by the late professor of Old Testament Studies at Catholic Theological Union, Rev. Carroll Stuhlmueller, Joan has produced a scholarly, yet highly readable, work that leads readers to seek the feminine images of God all through the Bible.

Following Francis of Assisi: A Spirituality for Daily

Living, Patti Normile, SFO, St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1996. \$7.95. To order: 800-488-0488.

In her third book (Visiting the Sick and Prayers for Caregivers), Patti explores Franciscan spirituality as it touches the lives of laypeople today. Murray Bodo, OFM, author of Francis: The Journey and the Dream says, "[Patti] invites the reader to follow Jesus in the manner of St. Francis, a manner that she sees revealed in the lives of ordinary people--the saints living among us. The holiness of these contemporary 'Franciscan saints' is the best proof that St. Francis' spirituality is alive and well today." National Minister, Richard Morton, SFO, says, "Normile transfers Francis' spirituality from medieval times to the busy, distracting and self-centered 1990's..."

Family Commission Chair, Carol Gentile, requests each Secular Franciscan to send a family picture in anticipation of the next National Fraternity meeting. Pictures might be shared at your local fraternity meeting and then sent together to:

Carol Gentile, SFO
136 Woods Avenue
Monaca, PA 15061

TAU-USA STAFF:

Editor: Patti Normile
Art Editor: Patti Dewitt; assistant, Sue Siuta
Proofreaders: Theresé and David Ream

What Conduct Offends the Good of the Order?

We considered recently the duty of the Fraternity Council to act whenever the good of the Order is threatened, to counsel with members and even recommend their dismissal from the Order in serious cases where they are found to have violated the Rule. Now we must ask ourselves what conduct may so offend the Rule that the good of the Order is placed in jeopardy and it becomes necessary for the Fraternity Council to deal with it.

Our members, moved by the Holy Spirit, are committed to live the Gospel in the manner of Saint Francis, following our Rule in fraternal communion. A careful reading of Chapter II, Title I, of the Constitutions (Articles 8-27) with its references to the Rule assists us to understand that spirit of welcoming and mutual understanding, joy and encouragement which sets us apart. Both the Rule and the Constitutions speak of what this spirit makes us want to do and be rather than setting up a list of "don'ts."

Steadfast members of the SFO have committed themselves among other things to:

- be faithful to liturgical prayer,
- read the Gospel each day,
- remain in active communion with the Church, with the Pope, bishops and priests--treating with respect those whose hands touch Christ daily,
- demonstrate love for Mary,
- fulfill faithfully our duties in life,
- live a poor and humble life, avoiding seeking or reveling in power in any sense;
- live a life of chastity according to our state in life and seek purity of heart,
- accept other people as brothers or sisters, granting equal status to all and being ready to serve all,
- stand for justice, defending it by word and example,
- work for peace in all ways and with all others especially in the family and the fraternity,
- respect all creatures and working for prudent ecology,
- hold ourselves ready for Sister Death at all times with joy and hope.

The member begins to flirt with serious violations of the Rule when, without reasonable justification, he or she neglects these commitments and inclinations. Some of the people who sow disharmony in the fraternity may include:

- Those who announce that they follow some practices set forth in the Rule but not others, claiming a right to miss Sunday Mass at will, thus setting a bad example for the brothers and sisters;
- Those who appear at fraternity social events or elections once or twice a year, pay their "dues!" and are not seen again with no word of explanation to their brothers and sisters;
- Those who desire to occupy "center stage" at fraternity meetings, placing their personal needs for psychological consolation above the fraternity's need to go forward with a Franciscan program of prayer and study;
- Those who loudly and publicly criticize the private lives of fellow Franciscans or the clergy, particularly by public declarations, letters or broadcasts, especially when identifying themselves as Secular Franciscans;
- Those who persistently continue to foment discord and upset, particularly during fraternity meetings, over personal or even fraternity business problems, failing to recognize that when the Council has made a determination, fraternal loyalty requires that the members accept that determination, at least until the next election. If they differ with the Council's determination, the proper remedy is to refer the matter to the Region in a quiet, non-quarrelsome fashion;
- Those who upset and confuse their brothers and sisters by calling into question matters of difficult theological interpretation without seeking advice from the Spiritual Assistant, or perhaps differing with him loudly during the meeting;
- Those who announce that they accept some tenets of the Church but not others such as birth control, remarriage after divorce, assisted suicide, abortion, and engage in hot debate on these subjects, marring the peace of fraternity meetings.

Any activity which becomes chronic and causes division within the Fraternity requires for the health of the body that the Council meet with the unruly brother or sister and explore ways in which the peace of the community can be restored. This is **not** harrassment or interference with First Amendment rights or rights to privacy. It amounts to prudent stewardship, to the protection of the group's needs as a group and to the firm resolution to adhere to the principles of that most tranquil and prayerful of men, Francis of Assisi.

¹ General Constitutions, SFO, Art. 1,p.3; Art. 3, p.3.

by Marguerite B. Stein, Canonist to NAFRA

READING FROM



THE RULE

Letters from you.....

I am writing in response to Al Rocco's letter (Spring, 1996). I disagree with his comment that we, as an Order should concentrate solely on proclaiming the Good News and not concern ourselves with social, economic and political issues.



He stated in his letter that Jesus did not concern Himself with such issues. However, I believe that Our Lord did involve Himself in the social issues of His time, using these actions to illustrate the message He was preaching. Against the air of discrimination and alienation that existed in His society, He reached out to the tax collectors, prostitutes, lepers and other so called "public sinners." He reached out to the Samaritan Woman and the Roman Centurion, violating the social tenets of His time. He did not hesitate to speak out against the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. He took action against the money changers, driving them out of the Temple. He preached that those who enter the Kingdom of God must feed the hungry, clothe the naked, give drink to the thirsty and visit the imprisoned. Jesus did more than just preach the Good News, He lived it.

St. Francis also lived the Good News in his time. He did not remove himself or his early followers from the marketplace, the town square, the farm fields or the family hearth. He believed strongly that one must live what one preaches. He too reached out to the alienated and forgotten ones of his society. He tried to be peacemaker between Christian and Moslem; Mayor and Bishop; angry factions in towns and cities. He wrote a letter to world leaders and even had one of his friars admonish the Holy Roman Emperor.

The Church, through the documents of Vatican II, has called us laypersons, we who have heard and accepted the Good News, to preach the Gospel to the world, to "prepare the way of the Lord," but in a way that is unique to our way of life. Guided and inspired by the Spirit through prayer, strengthened by grace through the Eucharist and the Sacraments, we are called not just to proclaim the Gospel, but to bring it alive before the world's eyes by our actions in our daily lives. We evangelize the world by having an influence on the world's structures. This means that we get involved in the fields of business, medicine, politics, etc., bringing our Gospel perspective. It means taking a prophetic stance in front of our society, reminding our brothers and sisters of the responsibility we all have for the welfare of each other.

To preach the Good News is vital. However, if we do not back up our preaching with the example of our own lives, with the actions we take in our society in light of the Gospel, then we become like so many ringing gongs, making a lot of noise and having no effect.

Jonathan Jones, SFO
St. Anthony Fraternity, Boston, MA



RECYCLED PAPER

SOYA INK

A Squirrel's Tale

(A Meditation on the Stigmata)
by Paul J. Bularzik, SFO

While caching acorns near Alverno mountain,
A cock crowed as the slim, saintly beggar,
Who preached to animal creatures,
Somberly approached with a hooded confrere
In silent hesitation like one condemned.

Slowly starting up the dewy steep path,
The brook babbling like the rabble,
Branches whipped by a misty sighing wind
Set a sorrowful and sinister scene
For reenacting the Jerusalem journey.

Scampering along with him
I heard his prayers of praise--suddenly
Suspended--a stumble into a bramble bush
Thorns piercing his tonsured head
Blood eddying into tear-stained eyes.

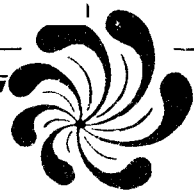
Struggling onto a little ledge
A covey of doves sounding sad
Hovered round the suffering savant.
"Do not fear for me, my doves,
I seek Him who forever loves."

Further up the precipice
Burdened with mankind's madness
Twice more sliding to his knees
Leaning on the companion's arm
Reached the goal 'neath clustering clouds.

Off alone to pray and to implore
His Lord to impose His painful gore
Five searing streaks flashed from a stormy sky
In ecstasy, in seraph enfolded,
Was stigmatized with wanted wounds.

A blazing sun wiped clear the sky.
He arose and left the stony cliff
In Perfect Joy to join his brothers
In continuing in the active search
For new ways to renew his church.





HAPPENINGS

SFO NETWORKING CORNER

Below are names and addresses of Seculars interested in networking with other Seculars of similar interests. With courtesy and love, doors can open to new and rewarding friendships. To be listed, send name, address and interest/profession to:

Mrs. Mary K. Mazotti, SFO Networking
P. O. Box 2571, Arnold, CA 95223-2571

Names will be printed once. Save lists.

Interested in healing professions
Clare McCluggage, SFO
10650 Countess Dr., Dallas, TX 75229
214/789-1799; e-mail clareSFO@aol.com

Mystical prayer, interpretative reading, liturgical song
James Anthony Rentrop, SFO
3065 Brookview Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45238-2001

Write to Mary Mazotti about ways SFO Networking Corner benefits you.

INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY FRANCISCAN LIFE

St. Francis College offers a correspondence program on contemporary Franciscan living. First course, FRAN201, is a 3-credit course; cost, \$275. For information, contact St. Francis College, Loretto, PA, (814) 472-3219.

Franciscan Family Apostolate

For information about supporting an impoverished family in India through Franciscan Family Apostolate, return the following to:

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

Name _____
Fraternity _____
Address _____

Franciscan Family Apostolate may be able to provide a speaker for your regional meeting.

For information contact:
Alan Ouimet (see above)

First Korean Franciscan Priest Ordained

When Korean Secular Franciscans come to America, they have a vision that God's special intention has brought them here to show how much God loves America and to develop vocations for multi-cultural ministry in this country. That vision was reflected in the ordination of Father Frances Kisoo Kim, May 18, at St. Anne Church, Fair Lawn, NJ.

Fr. Kim is the first immigrant Korean Franciscan priest to be ordained in the USA. Richard Morton, SFO, National Minister, and Fr. William Brand, OFM, Spiritual Assistant of St. Francis Region, joined over 100 Korean Secular Franciscans and other Korean Catholics from the northeast to celebrate Fr. Kim's ordination.

On May 19, Fr. Kim offered his first Mass of Thanksgiving at St. Leo Church, Elmwood Park, NJ. The Mass was a cooperative endeavor of SFOs and other Korean Catholics in choir and liturgy. Music included traditional folk music rhythms and lyrics written by a Korean martyr.

Fr. Kim's hardships of living as an immigrant in a strange land will enable his ministry to immigrants to be sympathetic to difficulties others face in their new land.

Mary Jane Foster Honored

Mary Jane Foster, SFO, RN, PhD, member of St. Anthony of Padua fraternity, has received the Prince Gallitzin Cross, an award given by Bishop Joseph Adamec, Altoona-Johnstown Diocese. The award honors "service given to the Church of Altoona-Johnstown reflecting the Gospel message of the Lord Jesus and the missionary spirit of Father Demetrius Gallitzin." Demetrius Gallitzin, a Russian prince, surrendered his title and was ordained in the United States. He nurtured Catholicism in the Altoona-Johnstown area through devoted and self-sacrificing service.

DOES YOUR FRATERNITY NEED A MINISTRY?

Consider CHAP--Church Assistance Program-- designed to enable groups to assist those needing assistance with drug/alcohol abuse/addiction, mental health problems such as eating disorders and depression. For information contact Carol Gentile, SFO, NAFRA Family Chairperson, 136 Woods Avenue, Monaca, PA 15061 (412) 775-4248.

MORE HAPPENINGS

Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs

Travel to places of spiritual interest is made possible by Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs. The group travel offers ease, economy and education by Franciscan friars.

FRANCISCAN PILGRIMAGE OF LIGHT IN ASSISI

December 27, 1999 - January 7, 2000

Candlelight procession from Assisi to the Porziuncola coincides with midnight service bringing in 2000
Light ritual for Feast of Epiphany in Rome

FRANCISCAN PILGRIMAGE OF THE ARTS

May 1-22, 2000

Assisi-Montefalco-Arezzo-Florence
Painters, musicians, writers of Middle Ages
Light for Third Millennium

FRANCISCAN MYSTICS AND SOLITUDE

July 13-August 9, 2000

Explore the passionate human hunger for God,
Franciscan hermitages and mystics

For information contact:

Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs
1648 South 37th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53215-1724 USA

Phone: 414/383-9870 Fax: 414/383-0335

St. Anthony Retreat

Planning a retreat or day of recollection for 1997? Plan one with St. Anthony of Padua, one of our order's greatest preachers and wonder workers.

Madeline Pecora Nugent, SFO, author of St. Anthony: Words of Fire, Life of Light, presents St. Anthony's sermons as retreats and days of recollection along with stories of the saint's life. For arrangements: Saints' Stories, Inc., 401/849-5421, 520 Oliphant Lane, Middletown, RI 02842-4600. Sponsoring fraternities are asked to provide a priest for Mass, Benediction and Confession. No fee is asked although sponsoring groups are asked to cover speaker's expenses and may wish to give presenter and priest a stipend.

Address correction for SFO Networking:

Roger Slemmer, SFO, #806851
Mt. Pleasant Correction Facility
Highway 218 S., Mt. Pleasant, IA 52641



A CELEBRATION!

St. Clare Fraternity, Omaha, NE, celebrated its 70th anniversary this Spring. During the celebration Edmund Wysaki (on right) was honored for 68 years of profession. Others in photo: Trudy Shaw, minister; Rev. John Pietramale, spiritual assistant; celebrant, Archbishop Emeritus Daniel E. Sheehan.

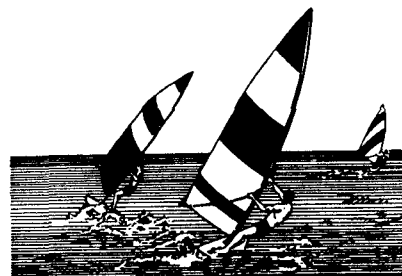
NEXT TAU-USA DEADLINE: OCTOBER 15

Submit articles to: Patti Normile, Editor, TAU-USA
609 Amherst Avenue
Terrace Park, OH 45174
FAX (513) 831-7542

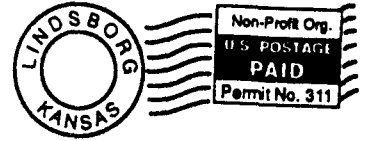
(Computer disk adaptable to WordPerfect 6.0 is appreciated.)

For subscription information or change of address: See back of TAU-USA. Right to copy all material printed in TAU-USA is granted. Please credit TAU-USA and author if noted.

Please note a correction for those using Gospel Living Every Day of Our Lives by Teresa V. Baker. On page 21 footnote #19 should read, "The Third Order Regular (T.O.R.) are those Franciscan Friars who wished to follow the Third Order Rule of St. Francis while living in community."

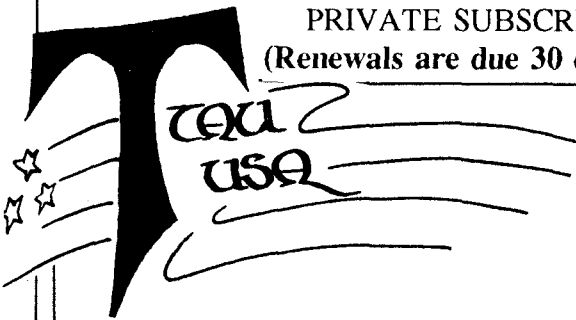


SECULAR FRANCISCAN PUBLICATIONS
NATIONAL FRATERNITY
SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER
108 N. MAIN STREET, PO BOX 189
LINDSBORG, KS 67456-0189



Address Correction Requested

PRIVATE SUBSCRIBERS, PLEASE CHECK EXPIRATION DATE ABOVE.
(Renewals are due 30 days after renewal date to insure uninterrupted mailings.)



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

New Subscription _____ Renewal _____ How many years? _____ Change of Address _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please make check payable to NAFRA and send to the above address. Domestic subscriptions are \$4.00 per year (4 issues); Canadian, \$5.00; foreign, \$6.00. If this is a renewal, and your name and address on this newsletter are correct, simply check renewal.