

TAU-USA



Issue Number 27

The Newsletter of the National Fraternity of the
Secular Franciscan Order in the United States

Summer 2000

Pilgrimage, A Walking Through Life

William Wicks, SFO, National Minister

You and I are on a pilgrimage, not like those who travel hundreds of miles to shrines such as Our Lady of Guadalupe, and certainly not like those pilgrims of the Middle Ages who journeyed for years on their way to and from the Holy Land and other holy places. We are on a holy pilgrimage through life itself.

As Secular Franciscans, we are asked to be present in the world, to be His Presence in the world, and we are asked to see with His eyes. Our pilgrimage in life should take us to an awareness of the divine presence in creation, in people, and in life situations. Saint Ignatius, in the *Contemplatio ad Amorem* of his *Spiritual Exercises*, invites us, as individuals, to contemplate God as the Giver and Source of all love and of all gifts. We are asked to become aware of the various manifestations of God's love in our lives and in the world around us, and to respond as we ought. Ignatius challenges us to contemplate this in order to Find God in All Things, and to make a fitting response.

*We, as fraternity,
walk together on
the road of life.*

Irish Bishop Colm O'Reilly, quoting Bernard Lonergan, said, "The best starting point for a prayer of pilgrimage is an openness to seeing life as a mystery, a place where

God is actively present.' Life has questions to which we have no full answers. God is at work there, drawing us to Himself. All of life is a pilgrimage, a mystery of God leading, purifying, inspiring us, as we journey toward Him."

Pilgrimage was often taken to be a sacramental in the Middle Ages; certainly, it often mediated grace to the changing person in a changing world. The notion of pilgrimage, for our own time, has many manifestations.

Saint Francis exhorted his brothers to live as pilgrims and strangers in this world. He summoned images of Abraham, Jesus, and the holy men and women of the early Christian tradition. Francis did not conceive of pilgrimage as exclusively an inner journey, but as "an inner journey which corresponded to an outer one."

Fraternity is a place of internal and external pilgrimage. We, as fraternity, walk together on the road of life, encountering moments of great and small conversions, and rejoicing in these moments. We encounter opportunities of grace in the lands of everyday life, just as the pilgrims of the Middle Ages encountered opportunities of grace on their physical journey to far away lands. In today's culture, the lands of every day



life can be just as alien as those faraway lands. The opportunity for entering into the Paschal mystery is just as real today as it was during Saint Francis' time. This is why we need the support of fraternity. Fraternity members are fellow travelers on these inner and outer journeys. They may add balm to spiritual bruises, and rejoice in spiritual successes: our apostolic endeavors, our moments of personal conversions. They share the ups and downs of the journey with us.

In our spiritual interplay with the world, we are fulfilling the spirit of the Incarnation; that is, by the entrance of our awesome God into humanity, through His Son Jesus, all of creation is redeemed. By our spiritual interplay, we are affirming and giving our acknowledgement to that eternal truth. And that truth leads us to a respect for all of God's creation, which we encounter on our pilgrimage of life, no matter the state of the creature.

By our Baptism, we are called to participate in the evangelical mission of the Church, and, especially as Franciscans living the Gospel, we are commissioned to see God on our daily rounds - wherever they may be. We need to open ourselves to the grace through which we find God in all the nooks and crannies, in the agony and stress and frustrations of life, as we travel life's paths.

As we experience life as pilgrims, let us pray that we will be able to see, and act, as Jesus wants. Our daily lives can provide opportunities for us to live the Gospel in ordinary and extraordinary ways. We just have to keep our eyes on, and off, the road ahead of us, and "respond as we ought."

Bon Voyage,

Bill

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Guidelines for Submission of Articles

Due to the overwhelming number of submissions for the national newsletter, we cannot possibly include all submissions. Therefore, to increase the likelihood of your submission being printed, we offer the following guidelines:

- Please ensure that articles do not exceed 500 words;
- Please understand that articles may be edited for length and clarity;
- Submissions received after the deadline for a particular issue will be given consideration for the following issue.
- In the Franciscan interest in ecology, please try to send submissions in electronic format (e-mail or floppy disc), instead of on paper.

Letters to the Editors

All correspondence sent to the editors becomes the property of the editors, and may be published in TAU-USA. Please state in all correspondence whether you wish to have your name withheld.



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"You shall not hate any man; but some you shall admonish, and pray for others, and still others you shall love more than your own life."

from the *Didache*

"A Great Pilgrimage to the House of the Father"

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Have you checked the soles of your shoes (or sandals) lately? If not, there's no better time than the present, because we've got some walking to do! We are a holy people on a holy pilgrimage! The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council frequently referred to the Church as the "pilgrim People of God". United with the whole Church, we Franciscans are continuing our celebration of the Great Jubilee Year 2000, the Holy Year which marks the 2000th anniversary of the Incarnation and Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In this issue of TAU-USA, the National Commissions invite us to focus our attention on the jubilee experience of pilgrimage.

In his 1994 Apostolic Letter *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* ("On the Coming of the Third Millennium"), Pope John Paul II prepared us to live this particular aspect of the Holy Year when he wrote: "The whole of the Christian life is like a great pilgrimage to the house of the Father, whose unconditional love for every human creature, and in particular for the 'prodigal son' (cf. Luke 15:11-32), we discover anew each day. This pilgrimage takes place in the heart of each person, extends to the believing community and then reaches to the whole of humanity."

No doubt about it, we Christians, and especially we Franciscans, are people on pilgrimage – the interior journey of ongoing conversion within ourselves as well as the exterior journey we undertake each day as we "go forth as witnesses and instruments of [the Church's] mission among all people" (SFO Rule, Article 6). This dimension of our life in Christ is meant to find particular expression in this Jubilee Year. In his 1998 Papal Bull *Incarnationis Mysterium* ("Bull of Indiction of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000"), our Holy Father points to the experience of pilgrimage as the first of the Jubilee signs "which attest to the faith and foster the devotion of the Christian people" (*Incarnationis Mysterium*, 7). He cites many Biblical references to the importance of making pilgrimage to the sacred places of the Jewish faith, culminating in the example of the Holy Family of Nazareth – Jesus, Mary and Joseph – going to the Holy City of Jerusalem. He then points to the history of the Church itself as "the living account of an unfinished pilgrimage, ...a significant part of the life of the faithful"

(*Incarnationis Mysterium*, 7). In Pope John Paul's words, "A pilgrimage evokes the believer's personal journey in the footsteps of the Redeemer: it is an exercise of practical



asceticism, of repentance for human weakness, of constant vigilance over one's own frailty, of interior preparation for a change of heart. Through vigils, fasting and prayer, the pilgrim progresses along the path of Christian perfection" (*Incarnationis Mysterium*, 7).



Our Seraphic Father Saint Francis certainly thought of himself as a pilgrim. How many journeys of faith did he make throughout Umbria and its surroundings, to Rome, and even to the Moslem-held Holy Land?! His many wanderings through the city of Assisi, preaching the Gospel of the Lord by word and example, enduring many hardships for the sake of that Gospel, constituted for him a kind of continuous pilgrimage. Considering the words and recent example of Pope John Paul II, as well as the example of Saint Francis, we are led to ask: not whether, but HOW will we – each of us individually and all of us together as a fraternity – make pilgrimage this year? For some it might mean actually traveling to Rome or the Holy Land or Assisi and visiting the holy sites of our faith there. For others it might take the form of visiting one or more of the national or local shrines and churches in each of our dioceses which our bishops

have designated as official places of Jubilee pilgrimage. Visiting specifically Franciscan places of pilgrimage would also be most appropriate for us.

In the Apostolic Penitentiary's document appended to the Papal Bull *Incarnationis Mysterium*, we find yet other meaningful ways of making pilgrimage: "The infirm and all those who for whatever reason are not

able to leave their own house... can gain the [Jubilee] indulgence by spiritually uniting themselves with those carrying out the prescribed work in the ordinary manner and by offering to God their prayers, sufferings and discomforts." The Jubilee indulgence can also be gained by the faithful "in any place, if they visit for a suitable time their brothers and sisters in need or in difficulty (the sick, the imprisoned, the elderly living alone, the handicapped, etc.), as if making pilgrimage to Christ present in them (cf. Matthew 25:34-36), and fulfilling the usual spiritual and sacramental conditions and saying the usual prayers."

Wow! Making a pilgrimage to Christ present in our sick and suffering sisters and brothers! Could there be a more Franciscan approach to pilgrimage? With all these options and possibilities available to us, any excuses for us NOT making some type of pilgrimage during this Jubilee Year have to be pretty feeble! May our good and gracious Lord continue to accompany us on each and every step of our pilgrimages, regardless of which specific form or forms our experience of pilgrimage takes during this Great Jubilee Year. Sisters and Brothers, God give you peace!

Wow! MAKING A
PILGRIMAGE TO CHRIST
PRESENT IN OUR SICK
AND SUFFERING SISTERS
AND BROTHERS! COULD
THERE BE A MORE
FRANCISCAN APPROACH
TO PILGRIMAGE?

Journey of Faith

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"Our life is a pilgrimage here on earth, in the footsteps of the Lord, toward his Father's Kingdom. As strangers and pilgrims in this world, we serve God in poverty and humility."
— from an old Franciscan book

"The quest for God has been a part of human experience from the beginning of time. History has always shown the human person to be on the move, on a pilgrimage of life, in search of God. In the human heart is ever present the desire to encounter the infinite experience of his friendship, peace, and love." (USSC, Pub. No. 5-335)



Pilgrimages are definitely on the increase, reports the *New York Times*. As Pope Paul VI says, "shrines are the clinics of the soul". As we gain more knowledge, science, technology, mobility and rapid travel, space exploration, and information super-highways, the greater is the quest of the soul for ultimate meaning (*Concilium*, 1996/4). People seek and hope to find what their present world has not been able to offer them. Those who are on a pilgrimage come from different cultures, backgrounds, ages and life situations, yet they all come searching for something beyond the ordinary.

We have models of pilgrims who were full of faith and courage. Two thousand years before Christ, Abraham and Sarah left everything they had and owned, without knowing their destination. They first symbolized the universal movement of humanity. Moses and the Israelites fled from Egypt and for forty years journeyed

We carried in our hearts a strong belief that God would lead us toward the fullness of life with Him forever.

through the desert. They turned to God for food and direction. Mary and Joseph also had a difficult journey when

they looked for a shelter in which to give birth to Jesus, but found only a stable. The three wise men looked for a sign, and followed a star that led them to the manger where the Messiah was born. Their faith, hope and trust in God carried them through Bethlehem.

I recall our family's journey to the United States twenty-eight years ago. We left our families and friends, our home and our jobs, without knowing what the future held for us in this foreign land. All we had was courage and

faith that God would journey with us, would bail us out when difficulty came, and with the Divine Light He would guide us in our desire to change our lives, to give a better education and future to our children. With all the political and economic problems besetting our

native country at that time, we decided to do something for our family. We carried in our hearts a strong belief that God would lead us toward the fullness of life with Him forever. I can recall how we looked forward to a new life full of surprises and promises, like any pilgrim who is about to undertake a journey. The hardships and self-sacrifices we went through during our first year of establishing our new home in this country helped us to deepen our trust, and to refocus our lives on God and the reality of heaven, which is the final goal of our pilgrimage. We have gained knowledge and wisdom by means of ceaseless prayer. We asked God for everything we needed. As pilgrims we left our home to seek a new one, to find meaning in life; and in return we found the power of prayer that brought us peace and joy and a true way to be in communion with God. Later on, we became followers of a great saint, Saint Francis, who taught us God's unconditional love. From then on, our course took us into the Franciscan journey, following Francis' footsteps.

I learned what Saint Francis said to his brothers whom he sent two by two to make a journey to different parts of the world to

The hardships and self-sacrifices... helped us to deepen our trust....

announce peace to the people: "Cast your care upon the Lord, and he will sustain you." How true indeed!

Pope John Paul II describes the Christian life as a "great pilgrimage moving forward stage by stage to the house of the Father. The first stage begins in the heart of each person, then expands outward to the believing community, and finally reaches out to include the whole human race." (*Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, 49) The Pope said that Christians should welcome the new millennium with a "sense of being on a journey to the Father... a journey of authentic conversion." "This conversion is urgent in contemporary society where there is so much violence in our society, disregard for human life (abortions), adultery, unrestricted sexual expression (on TV and movies), discrimination based on race and gender, the glorification of greed and extravagant lifestyles". (*Columbia*, April 1999)

We now urge you, our Franciscan families, to become pilgrims after the mind and heart of Pope John Paul II, who just ended his holy pilgrimage to the places that traced the "history of salvation in the land in which it took place". This was the fulfillment of a dream he had

... continued on page nine



Pilgrimage & Conversion

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The basic intent of any pilgrimage is for the pilgrims to be drawn closer to God, through a journey that takes them out of the ordinary routines of life. A second reason for pilgrimage is to be provided a different experience, which will put the pilgrim in touch with thoughts and feelings that have been reduced by the ordinary events of our lives. We usually think of pilgrims in the Middle Ages going on long journeys to distant lands to do this. Indeed, Francis, who at some point wanted to be a

martyr, made such a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and on to Egypt where he met the Sultan. His dreams of martyrdom were shattered by the reality of the Crusades. Brutality was the order of the day, far removed from the message of the One Whom Francis followed. Francis' notion of reality was also disturbed by his meeting with the Sultan, a meeting which

Francis' notion of reality was also disturbed by his meeting with the Sultan, a meeting which gave him tremendous insights into "the other".

gave him tremendous insights into "the other". He found that the practices of "the other" were much more prayerful than the Christendom of his era. The Islamic call to prayer several times a day was a sharp contrast to the crusading armies which were out to convert them by the sword. The respect shown to him by "the other" was not what Francis had been expecting at all. It might have been easier for Francis to have accepted martyrdom than to accept the humanity and appreciation of the infidel. This encounter for Francis was another point of conversion with lasting effects. His next update of the *Rule* seemed to have dropped references to the desirability of being a martyr, and moved more toward

the Francis we know as the reconciler, and the model we look to for an approach to peace and justice issues.

It is the nature of pilgrimage to take us out of the ordinary, and to open us to the experiences that are not familiar. Pilgrimage is the opportunity to see different ways of living and doing things, that help us put our limited experience in relationship to the broader spectrum of human existence. If we approach it with an open mind and heart, we will find many things that are very different in other cultures, but



still work. We will come away with an appreciation of the variety of ways people can do things, and some appreciation of the love that God has for all of us. We will be less tied to the idea that there is only one way to do things, and that our way is the only right way. But we can do this only if we trust that our Creator loves all of us equally, and probably enjoys seeing the different ways we have of coming to an understanding of ourselves and our world.



Another aspect of being a pilgrim is that we are not part of the place we are passing through, so we are free to observe and to learn. In one very real sense, the same can be said for our lives. We are put on earth to learn some important lessons, and as much as we may feel tied to a place, we will not be there forever. We are all just "passing through", pilgrims on this earth. When we go on a pilgrimage, it helps us to appreciate this fact of life. If we really appreciated where our journey is taking us in our pilgrimage on earth, would we be so self-centered and tribal? Would we find it easier to see "the other" as just another pilgrim? Francis may have come to some understanding of this from his pilgrimage, which helped him appreciate that we are all children of the same Father. We put up barriers to make us special, but we are special only by our own terms, and we fail to realize how special we are to God. When we realize the simple facts of God's love, then we understand that the meaning of Justice is maintaining right relationships with all the people we encounter.

In an article entitled "Pilgrims and Strangers: Francis and the Spirituality of Travel" Keith Warner, OFM writes:

Ultimately Francis was not a pilgrim in that he fixed Jerusalem or a holy shrine as his destination. Pilgrimage for Francis was living out Gospel values in this world, with all the tension that occurred between the two. His affection was toward Jesus, and his destination the kingdom of heaven.

(see <http://sbfranciscans.org/publications/theway/letme.htm>)

Because, like Francis, we try to live out Gospel values in this world, the courses of *our* lives on earth, by their very nature, are also pilgrimage. Like Francis, our affection is for Jesus, and our destination is the kingdom of heaven as we work for justice, to restore right relationships with people and all of creation. Especially in this year of Jubilee, we should strive to see our individual and collective journeys as pilgrimage.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Do I have to travel to distant lands to begin my pilgrimage, or merely go downtown?
2. What things do I need to leave behind so I can see new things on my pilgrimage?
3. How far do we have to travel to find "the other"?

Youth Jubilee – Rome 2000

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As I walked along the beach on the Bay of Bengal last December, like most beachcombers, I started picking up seashells of various shapes and sizes. The colorful ones caught my eye first, but ones of interesting shapes and contours also graced my growing collection. It was a warm afternoon, and having just come from Sunday liturgy, my thoughts lingered on the seashell as being a symbol of our Baptism, and with all the waves splashing at my feet, the symbolism of the waters of Baptism literally washed over me. I thought about the significance of my baptismal commitment, and what God is calling me to do in my life as a Christian and a Franciscan.

My thoughts then progressed to how the seashell was also known to be the symbol of pilgrims. Saint Bridget is usually pictured in a cloak covered with seashells. Pilgrims in mediaeval times would wear a large seashell on a leather thong around their necks. The seashells were not for adornment, but rather for a practical use. They could be used as cups to retrieve water from lakes and streams to quench their thirst. But the pilgrims not only had a physical thirst, but a spiritual thirst, the thirst that initially led them on their pilgrimage.

Pilgrims in mediaeval times would wear a large seashell on a leather thong around their necks.

Pilgrimages have been made since the dawn of time; humans have always been on the move, moving in search of God. From Abraham's pilgrimage to a new land, Mary's pilgrimage to Elizabeth's home, Christ's

pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the glory of Easter, Saint Francis' pilgrimage to Rome to gain approval for our Rule, and our continued movement as a "pilgrim church", we all live life as an ongoing pilgrimage to find and experience our God.

But what is true pilgrimage? The Church defines a pilgrimage as a journey undertaken with religious motives to a sacred site. It is leaving one's own environment and safety zone to travel out of our daily lives with a specific spiritual reason and purpose in mind. Sometimes we need to step back or step outside of our normal daily lives so that we can look at them with honesty, and understand where we need to travel spiritually. With the Holy Spirit as our guide, we can follow Christ's footsteps and go beyond ourselves. To go on a pilgrimage is to open oneself to new experiences, and to have the courage and strength to rediscover new meaning in life through and with Christ.

John Paul II stated that "Pilgrimage is a joyous community experience that leads one before the Lord, to seek His face, to experience the joy of His house." With this in mind, the Youth/Young Adult Commission will

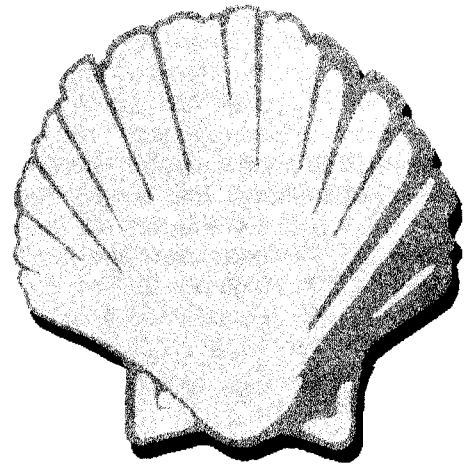
travel to Rome, Italy, in August, to celebrate and experience the Franciscan World Youth Days and the International World Youth Days with the Holy Father and thousands of our brothers and sisters from around the globe.



The two days prior to the International World Youth Days are set aside for the Franciscan World Youth Days. Four delegates from each country have the chance to meet, share, and discuss the many differences and similarities we as Franciscan Youth have throughout the world. We will pray, sing, laugh, and cry with other Franciscan youth, young adults, and youth leaders, as we share our own experiences and stories of our many varied and diverse countries.

We will carry with us the symbol of the seashell around our necks, reminding us that we are indeed pilgrims, pilgrims searching for meaning to our lives through Christ - not only our Christian lives, but our lives as Franciscans - and what that meaning and commitment will mean to the future of our Order, especially concerning youth and young adults. During these days, reminded again by the seashell, we will have the opportunity to reaffirm our baptismal commitments by opening ourselves to God's word and life, lived through our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Pray with us that the Holy Spirit will guide our pilgrimage, that we may follow the footsteps of Christ, and that we will be blessed by God our Father.



Questions for Discussion:

1. When was the last time we "stepped outside" of our lives to take an inventory of our spiritual deficits?
2. How can we take these deficits and turn them into positive changes in view of our baptismal and Franciscan commitments?
3. If a physical pilgrimage is not feasible, how can we journey on pilgrimage in our hearts to the Father?

The Duns Scotus Secular Franciscan Formation Trust Fund

Anne Mulqueen, SFO
Member, Duns Scotus Board of Trustees

- What is it?
- Who was Duns Scotus?
- Why does the Trust Fund exist?
- What can the Trust Fund do for me?
- Who is eligible to apply for assistance?
- How do I apply for funds?

Basically, these questions are the thrust of this article.

What is it?

In 1930, the Friars Minor of Saint John the Baptist Province established a seminary near Detroit for friars in initial formation. The name of the seminary was Duns Scotus College. In the 1990s the formation center was sold and some of the proceeds were allocated to continue Franciscan formation. The portion allotted to the Secular Franciscan Order was named The Duns Scotus Secular Franciscan Formation Trust Fund.

Who was Duns Scotus?

The Trust Fund bears the name of Blessed John Duns Scotus, a Scotsman born in the 13th century, who became a Friar Minor. Early in his vocation, John Duns' Order recognized his superior intellect, and they encouraged him to pursue studies in theology and philosophy. Duns Scotus spent a decade teaching in England and France. His God-given capacity, coupled with his teaching experience in institutions of higher learning, molded Duns Scotus into one of the Catholic Church's foremost philosophers.

Duns Scotus believed that God's love for humanity was expressed through the incarnation of Jesus Christ. He said that Christ, by becoming human, revealed that love. He reasoned that if love was God's intention for creation from the beginning, then the Virgin Mary, who gave human form to Jesus, would be untouched by original sin.

In the 19th Century, Pope Pius IX declared the Immaculate Conception an article of faith, and the fruit of John Duns Scotus' theology became doctrine. His memorial is November 8.

Why does the Trust Fund exist?

The Duns Scotus Formation Trust Fund exists "so that others [Secular Franciscans] may be enriched by the teachings of Saint Francis of Assisi." The funds are available for *formation* purposes and programs that enhance Secular Franciscan formation at all levels of fraternity. It exists to encourage Secular Franciscans to grow in their understanding and experience of the Franciscan charism.

What can the Trust Fund do for me?

The Trust Fund provides financial assistance for formation related needs. If you are engaged in a process or event that enhances Secular Franciscan formation and requires financial assistance to accomplish it, submit your request to the Trust Fund. The term "formation related" goes beyond initial or ongoing formation and encompasses broader areas such as inter-fraternal and inter-regional formation workshops or training programs for formators. These words intentionally allow for creativity and inspiration in formation content. The Board of Trustees encourages you to evaluate your needs and submit a proposal that reflects your plan. First, assess what you can do for yourself and then make your needs known.

Who is eligible to apply for assistance?

Any Secular Franciscan or group of Secular Franciscans, in need of financial assistance for the enhancement of formation, is eligible for Duns Scotus funding. If the request comes from an individual or a local fraternity, it should be made through the region of jurisdiction. The information to be included is listed below.

How do I apply for funds?

Proposals for funding should be submitted to:

The Duns Scotus Secular Franciscan
Formation Trust Fund
National Fraternity, SFO/USA
UMBRIA, RR #3, Orrick Road
Kirksville, MO 63501

and include the following:

- (1) an estimate of the cost of the effort being funded, including as much detail as possible;
- (2) a breakdown of which costs will be covered locally and which costs require Trust Fund assistance;
- (3) a statement of the anticipated results and/or benefits of the project;
- (4) a date by which funding is needed; and
- (5) the name, mailing address, phone number, and e-mail address of:
 - (a) the fraternity or individual on whose behalf the proposal is being submitted;
 - (b) the local fraternity minister and formation director;
 - (c) the regional fraternity minister and formation director.

John Duns Scotus prayed, "You are boundless good, and every single being in its own way comes back to you as to its ultimate end." The Duns Scotus Secular Franciscan Formation Trust Fund exists to assist all Secular Franciscans in their journey to God.

***All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching,
for refutation, for correction, and for training in righteousness.***

Contemplative Retreat Saint Thomas More Region

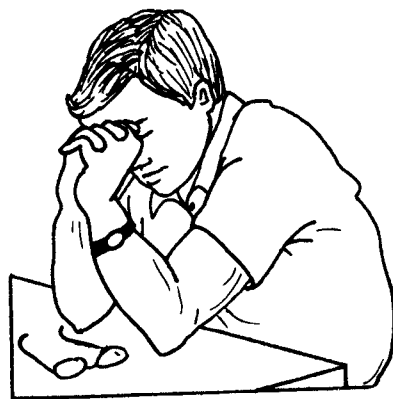
David Russell, SFO, Topowa, AZ

FRIDAY: Members of our Region met for our second annual weekend of silence and contemplation, a time to listen to the words of the heart, the voice of God.

Our Retreat started before we arrived, our expectations slowing down the endless stream of words and our fast ways of moving. Twenty-three of us will fill this little retreat house. Some will start making dinner in a silent refectory, listening to the graces of leaf and root which the food is teaching us. At dinner there will be plainsong and readings, which touch the stillness with muted colors of sound.

*Ultimately,
contemplation is the
prayer of being - of
being helplessly
present.*

The Host in its simple space of eternity, silent on the altar, greets the brothers and sisters as they enter the chapel. The soft quiet sounds of entering footsteps, the brittle scratch of Breviary pages turning to the Friday Evening Prayer.



Psalms-songs of the heart's journey, our journey, praying for the world. An intimate feeling of closeness and belonging that moves through the spaces of chapel, refectory, and compounds, like an invisible breathing of spirit. Then begins the schedule of

worshippers for twenty-four hours of adoration.

SATURDAY: In the last moments of darkness, as night reaches into a new and coming light, the earth poises for its first breath. Here on the Tohono O'Odham Reservation is this Mission of San Solano, an island in the desert. To the east we see the peak of Baboquivari, sacred to the Tohono O'Odham, which the sun now begins to profile. One must experience this, the first rays of the sun, then the full blast of the risen sun. It is time for Lauds, time for voices to proclaim the day of the Lord.

Ours is a contemplative retreat - but what is contemplation? Contemplation is a term we need to learn, then unlearn. Our Rule says: "As Jesus was the true worshipper of the Father, so let prayer and contemplation be the soul of all they are and do." Contemplation is not a technique, it is not a method. Saint Paul spoke of contemplation when he said, "pray without ceasing". The only thing we really do "without ceasing" is to be. Ultimately, contemplation is the prayer of being - of being helplessly present.

Father Walter Holly, OFM came for our Reconciliation and Mass. The Bread broken for our sake has been consumed by soul and body. The Mass is ended, go in peace. Then there is Night Prayer and the night's adoration.

SUNDAY: Lord, open my lips. And my mouth will proclaim your praise. The sun is moving up behind Baboquivari flaming the eastern sky. Then, in the blinking of an eye, the sun breaks over the mountain in a piercing blaze. Like a prayer, this is not an experience, it is all experience, a Canticle of Creatures sharing the life of God.

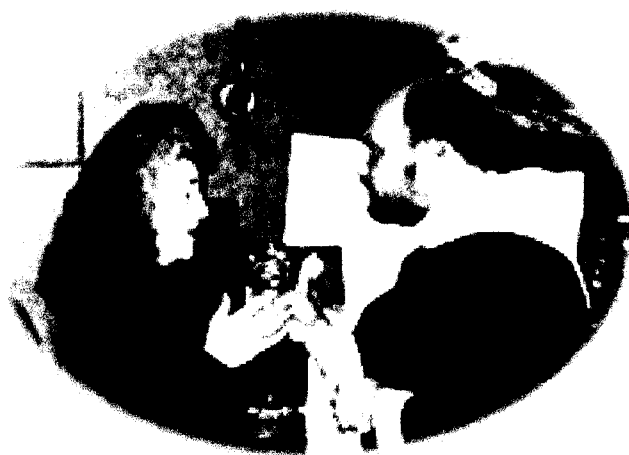
We have all been Marys and Marthas, readers, adorers, cooks, dish washers, etc. As we leave to re-enter our world, God's world, the one He has called us to, through the promises we made in silence, we can truly begin to see the world as brothers and sisters.



National Formation Commission Co-Chair Ordained Deacon

David Ream, SFO, Co-Chair of the National Formation Commission, was ordained to the Permanent Diaconate on December 4, 1999 by the Most Reverend John R. Gaydos, D.D., Bishop of Jefferson City, MO. Accepting this ministry as a couple, Deacon Dave and his wife Thérèse, are grateful that Bishop Gaydos has granted his permission for them to continue their service to the Secular Franciscan Order as part of their commitment to the Diocese and the Church.

Among those celebrating this joyous occasion with Deacon Dave and Thérèse were Anthony and Mary Mazotti, SFO, John Sanborn, SFO, Frances and Bill Wicks, SFO, Juan Lezcano, SFO, and Marie Amore, SFO.



Deacon Dave offers the Blood of Christ to wife, Thérèse.

*May God continue to bless
the good work
He has begun in you,
Deacon Dave and Thérèse!*

Secular Franciscan Inspires Hispanic Youth

Anthony and Mary Mazotti, SFO
Chairs, National Youth/Young Adult Commission
P.O. Box 2571, Arnold, CA 94223-2571
209-795-3809; e-mail: mkmaz@goldrush.com

Genaro Gonzalez, SFO, is the Minister of San Juan Bautista Fraternity, Sacramento, CA, and the chairperson of the Spanish-speaking Franciscan Youth/Young Adult Commission of Junipero Serra Region. The Region is also blessed to have a chairperson appointed to the English-speaking Franciscan Youth. A few years ago, Genaro began meeting with Hispanic youth/young adults of his parish, and other youth who were not identified with any parish, including migrant workers. The youth saw him as a caring big brother or father, who listened to them, and made them feel important and recognized. Genaro never failed to mention that he was a Secular Franciscan who took his vocation seriously. The group is known as KERYGMA - Jovenes Unidos En Cristo.

Inspired by Saint John Bosco's work with youth, Genaro studied the life of the saint as a model for bringing youth to God. Once, after realizing that he was showing too much seriousness toward the active young people, Genaro decided that it was best to lighten up a bit. He learned to play the guitar in order to accompany the singing during the two-hour meetings. The program for the meetings includes prayer and singing, talks on Saint Francis and other saints, Bible discussion, and question and answer time on subjects within Catholicism.

With the added help of several adult leaders, the group became known for the plays they performed based on spiritual themes and true life situations. These were presented by permission of the Sacramento Diocese and of pastors who invited the players. All seven plays, five of which were written by Genaro, were presented in Spanish, with the exception of one which was performed in English and Spanish. The plays drew audiences of 50 to 1300 people, including several Secular Franciscan fraternities, and were staged in large parish halls.

The group was started seven years ago with only three members, and now has grown to about seventy active and inspired young apostles, taking retreats to the youth of other parishes in the diocese. Two years ago they also started to have monthly diocesan Masses. As a young adult living in Michoacan, Mexico, Genaro loved working with youth, and continues showing the same love to this day. He now lives in Sacramento, is married, and is the father of three young children. He is seriously thinking of forming a small group of Franciscan spirituality (JUFRA) for Spanish-speaking youth. Genaro is an inspiring example of a young Secular Franciscan father, working with youth among Hispanics.

The National Secular Franciscan Youth/Young Adult Commission welcomes information about Franciscan Youth Leaders and their groups. Please send information to us at the address above.

Journey of Faith (continued from page four)

almost from the very beginning of his papacy. Following his example, may we search for Jesus and open our hearts to His love. Our Holy Father accomplished something very impressive and extraordinary. Think for a moment what God has allowed us to witness! The Pope made a very public act of humility in which he reminded the billion or so Catholics of the world that they must have respect, reliance and trust in God and His Providence. Isn't this exactly what Saint Francis taught us? Our *Rule*, Article XI, tells us, "...in the spirit of 'the Beatitudes', and as pilgrims and strangers on their way to the home of the Father, they should strive to purify their hearts from every tendency and yearning for possession and power". Franciscans, wrote Father Lester Bach (*Catch Me a Rainbow Too*, p. 125), use power not to dominate and control people, but to serve and collaborate with them... that we relate well to one another. That poverty is based on trust in God and it acknowledges our need for God and finds ways to share things. "Take nothing for your journey, no staff, no bag, nor bread, nor money – not even an extra tunic." (Luke 9:3-NRSV). Reliance and trust in God, that He will sustain us, are what we carry with us, nothing else.

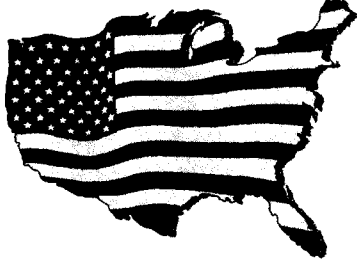
As followers of Saint Francis, we embrace the Franciscan way of life and we do it as members of a community. Father Bach considers us as "pilgrims ready to share whatever we have with one another. We share many experiences with God – we share loneliness and fear; we share moments of gladness, we learn to dance together to the melody of gospel life; we learn to lean on each other and support one another. Sometimes we are weak and need help. At other times we are strong and give help. There is no ending to the possibilities of a gospel life."

As we are all pilgrims on this earth, each one is called to serve the least of our brothers and sisters. We all belong to the same family of God. Members of a parish come from different families of different cultures, races and origins. Merely occupying the same space in a church or living in the same neighborhood does not itself create a spirit of community. What forms a special bond among people is their love of God and one another. (*Many pilgrims, one family of God.* (USSC Pub. 541-0)) Saint Paul wrote to the Ephesians: "You are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the holy ones and members of the household of God...." (Ephesians 2:9)

Questions for Discussion:

1. If we are to live as one community, how can we create a sense of belonging to the members of our family, our neighbors, and in our parish?
2. As each one of us is chosen to inherit the eternal kingdom, how can we serve the least of our brothers and sisters?
3. How can the family become a vehicle through which people can effectively contribute to the well-being of others?

Regional Roundup



Please be sure to add us to the mailing list for your regional newsletter:

*Mr and Mrs Antony Outhwaite, SFO, Editors, TAU-USA
6 Light Street, Nuangola, PA 18637*

Blessed Katharine Drexel Region

In November 1999, the Region installed Chairpersons for the Apostolic Commissions at the Regional Council Meeting. The Chairpersons are: Anne Gormley, SFO, Ecology; Rita Myers, SFO and Joseph Coco, SFO, Family; John Burke, SFO, Peace and Justice; Theresa Redder, SFO, Work; and Sister Bernice, OSF, Youth / Young Adult.

Blessed Katharine Drexel Region will host the annual NAFRA meeting in October at Mother Boniface Center near Philadelphia, PA.

Five Franciscan Martyrs Region

Pamela Nagle, SFO reports that the fifth triennial Chapter of Mats was held at San Pedro Center, February 4 - 6. Over 120 Franciscans participated this year. Father Regis Armstrong, OFM Cap. was the presenter for the weekend. He updated the assembly on the progress of the revision of the Franciscan *Omnibus of Sources*. Father Regis presented five conferences during the Chapter of Mats, covering different aspects of this project, and some new insights into Saint Francis of Assisi. The five conferences were: the historical background of the project; the importance of a chronological view of the early documents; the literary perspective and its challenges; predominant themes appearing in the early works; and future directions of the project of revision.

Holy Trinity Region

Holy Trinity Region held their full council meeting on April 1, in Springfield, OH.

The Regional Formation Director, Ralph Schlueter, SFO, is planning the annual Day of Recollection which will be held at Good Shepherd Church in Montgomery, OH on August 19.

La Verna Region

Approximately 120 Secular Franciscans from La Verna Region, (which includes the fraternities in Wisconsin, and the upper peninsula of Michigan), walked the Way of the Cross outdoors in the street around Saint Benedict's Church in Milwaukee on April 15, 2000. The theme was "Peace and Non-violence". They look forward to making this an annual event.

Mother Cabrini Region

The Region held its annual Chapter of Ministers at Mayslake Village in Oak Brook, IL on May 15. They received a pastoral visitation from Father Loren Connell, OFM.

The Regional Candidates' Retreat was held at Mayslake Village, April 8 and May 6.

The annual regional retreat will be held at Marytown in Libertyville, IL September 15 - 17.

Lucy Linko, SFO, Regional Councilor for Spiritual Life and Liturgy is currently planning the Mother Cabrini celebration for November 12. The celebration includes Mass and a reception.

Our Lady of Indiana Region

The Region will have a fraternal visitation during their weekend meeting, June 9 - 11 in Fort Wayne, IN, and will hold their annual regional retreat at the Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis, IN, July 14 - 16. Father Lester Bach, OFM Cap. will be the retreat master.

Our Lady of the Angels Region

Our Lady of the Angels Region celebrated "Convivenza", (formerly called "Unity Day") a fraternal gathering of Franciscan joy, on Saturday, May 13, at Saint Francis Church in Hackensack, NJ.

The North New Jersey cluster of the Region will sponsor an organizational meeting to investigate the feasibility of establishing a local chapter of Franciscans International on June 10 at Assumption Church in Wood-Ridge, NJ.

The Region will hold an All Commission Regional Workshop Saturday, June 17, at Assumption Church in Wood-Ridge, NJ.

Queen of Peace Region

The Minnesota annual retreat was held May 19 - 21 at Franciscan Retreats in Prior Lake, MN. The theme was "The Four J's in Jubilee - Jesus, Justice, Journey, Joy".

On July 9, San Damiano Fraternity in Marshalltown, IA, will celebrate its canonical establishment.

San Damiano Fraternity of Elk River, MN will celebrate its canonical establishment at Saint Andrews Church in Elk River on August 20.

The Nebraska Chapter of Mats gathering will be held August 27.

The Region will sponsor a millennium celebration during the weekend September 29 - October 1 at Christ the King Retreat House in Buffalo, MN. Sister Ramona Miller, OSF will be the presenter. Archbishop Harry Flynn will offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in a special Jubilee celebration.

The Iowa annual Fall Retreat will be held on October 1 at the American Martyrs Retreat House in Cedar Falls, IA.

Saint Clare Region

The annual regional retreat was held during the weekend of March 31 to April 2, and was attended by sixty-four Secular Franciscans. The talks were given by Father Benet Fonck, OFM.

Mary Ellen Herrmann, SFO, Regional Minister, announces that the Region will celebrate the Feast of Saint Anthony on June 13 at Saint Anthony of Padua Parish in Saint Louis, MO, at a Mass which will be offered by one of the Bishops of the Saint Louis Archdiocese. Lilies and Saint Anthony's Bread will be distributed to the congregation.

On July 22, the Region will sponsor an Apostolic Commissions workshop in the cafeteria of Saint Anthony Parish.

Saint Francis Region

Saint Francis Region will sponsor Community 2000 – Catching the Spirit of Francis, the Secular Franciscan Order Western Week of Community, at Mission San Luis Rey Retreat Center in Oceanside, CA during the week August 13 - 18.

Troubadours of Peace Region

Robert Fitzsimmons, SFO, the Formation Director for the Tri-Cities Washington forming group in Troubadours of Peace Region, has completed the Life-Giving Union correspondence course, and is now certified as a Spiritual Animator. Robert is the third member of the Region to be so certified.

Father John de Paemelaere, OFM, Regional Spiritual Assistant, will celebrate his fiftieth anniversary of priestly ordination on September 22, 2000.



Mission Statement

Five Franciscan Martyrs Region has written and published their Mission Statement:

The Five Franciscan Martyrs Region of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States is the organic union of all Secular Franciscan fraternities in the State of Florida and in South Georgia.

We desire to promote *in the world* a deeper presence of the Catholic Faith and the Franciscan tradition and we seek to bring the Gospel Beatitudes of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, as personified by Saint Francis of Assisi, to all our secular, daily lives.

We foster a spirit of prayer, conversion, reconciliation, justice, and service, especially to the marginalized in our society.

We invoke the intercession, honor the memory, and advance the Cause of the patrons of our Region, the Five Franciscan Martyrs of *La Florida*, who, in AD 1597, freely gave their lives in testimony to the dignity of Christian marriage and family life.



"I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain and to be sent on my way there by you, after I have enjoyed being with you for a time."

Romans 15:24

NAFRA Peace Award Re-established

At the 1999 NAFRA meeting, a committee was established to re-institute the Peace Award. This Committee has developed guidelines, and has submitted them to the National Fraternity for approval. The Peace Award Committee consists of Ken Beattie, SFO, Chair, Kevin Corbett, SFO, Sandi Kath, SFO, Lynne Murray, SFO, Tom Mitus, SFO, and Arturo Villarreal, SFO.



Franciscan Millennium Prayer

Earleen Soprych, SFO
Mother Cabrini Region

Master, make me a Franciscan worthy of Thee.
Instrument of peace, may I always be,
Loving, caring, praying for all,
Listening to and embracing the weak and the small.
Earth's creatures I will protect, and guard your land,
Never wasting the resources formed by Your hand.
No harmful words will I speak to another.
I will respect each life as sister and brother.
Using the graces You have given from above
May I enter this millennium Lord as a mirror of Your love.



John Murphy Honored

Bill Wicks, SFO

John Murphy, SFO was honored for his fifty-seven years of dedicated service to the Secular Franciscan Order at a gathering of the Saint Thomas More Regional Fraternity at the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, Arizona, in February. John was National Treasurer when I was professed into the Order in 1982. He has served at all levels of fraternity. At the gathering, John was presented with a "thank you" plaque by National Formation Commission Co-Chair, Deacon David Ream, SFO, who presided at the Regional Fraternity Elections. John also received a painting of Saint Francis of Assisi, presented by Regional Minister Terry McCarthy, SFO. John, who was professed in 1943 in New York, said that he used to travel twenty-five miles to fraternity meetings. "I took very seriously the commitment to be a member of the Secular Franciscan Order." John said: "I've always sincerely tried to be active in the fraternity. To the good Lord, I'm thankful for my health and the ability to meet good people. I have many fond memories." Regional Spiritual Assistant, Father Alberic Smith, OFM, presided at the Mass for the installation of the new officers. John lives in Phoenix with his lovely wife, Madonna, who is also a dedicated Secular Franciscan. Congratulations John! God grant you many more happy years.

A Franciscan Pilgrimage Experience

Patricia Sovich, SFO, Minister,
Troubadours of Peace Region



This past October I had the opportunity to make a pilgrimage to Assisi and Rome. The journey was made more enjoyable because I was able to share it with a very cohesive though diverse group including four other Secular Franciscans. Bill Armstrong was from southern California, Mary Lou Betzing and Joanne Cody were from Saint Clare's in Portland, and Pat DeMare was from Servants of the Lord in Bremerton. We were blessed with the companionship of a Poor Clare from Michigan, a Franciscan Brother from New Jersey, ten nuns from various religious orders and eight "friends", who just wanted to follow in the footsteps of Saints Francis and Clare.

A pilgrimage differs from a tour in that it is not exactly a vacation. "It is moving out of one's known environment into another, and at the same time a moving out of one's mindset into another in order to know Christ Jesus. To be a pilgrim in one sense means to be guided by another." And guided we were by three great Franciscan friars: Benet Fonck, Roch Niemier and John Wojtowicz.

Assisi is a beautiful medieval town in the Umbrian region of central Italy. Unfortunately, it was still recovering from the after effects of the 1997 earthquakes, so several of the sacred shrines were still undergoing repairs, and not open to the public. This was especially true of the Basilica of Santa Chiara, the burial place of Saint Clare and the repository of the San Damiano Cross through which Francis received the command to repair God's church.

We were able to visit the Basilica of San Francesco where he is buried, the church of San Damiano where Saint Clare lived and died, and the Basilica of Saint Mary of the Angels, which contains the Porziuncola. The latter

two have been totally restored, and, like the Sistine chapel, the many years of candle smoke and dirt have been completely removed, taking them back to their original beauty.

Francis was constantly on a pilgrimage with his brothers. He would often go to a hermitage where he could pray and communicate with his Lord and Savior. Some were near, and some were quite a distance from Assisi. Two of note were La Verna, where he received the stigmata, and Greccio, where he initiated the re-enactment of the events of Bethlehem at the birth of Our Lord.

Francis was constantly on a pilgrimage with his brothers.

We witnessed several ceremonies during this time which were especially moving. One was a healing ceremony at San Damiano, which enabled many to be relieved of burdens that they had been carrying for many years. Another was the "departure ceremony" at Saint Mary of the Angels where we were blessed, given tau crosses and "sent out" to carry out the gospel life as community. The third was a "luminarium" ceremony, during which we received a candle, symbolic of the light of Christ, and a call to fraternal union with each other and Francis and to holiness in Christ.

I returned with a deeper sense of awareness for fraternity, knowing we are all pilgrims on this spiritual journey of life. None of us accomplishes alone the tasks we are given; we need the nourishment and support of community. As Franciscans, we can and should transform the world as we journey through it, carrying the light of Christ.



Congratulations, Brother James!

Bill Wicks, SFO

Congratulations go to Brother James Boyle, TOR on his appointment as Headmaster at Serra Catholic High School in McKeesport, PA. However, because this assignment will occupy very much of his time, he has offered his resignation as the TOR representative to, and present President of, the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants. Brother James, a member of the Province of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, has a BA in history from the College of Steubenville and a M. Ed. from Loyola College of Maryland. Besides his National Fraternity commitment, he has also served our Secular Franciscan Order as Regional Spiritual Assistant and local Spiritual Assistant. We will all miss Brother James' contribution in service to us. He was, and is, a true family member. I will particularly miss doing the Elections and Visitations with him; he was a good companion. Our prayers go with you, Brother James, as you start your new assignment. You will always be in our thoughts and in our prayers. Thank you.

Jubilee Justice

Dan and Sarah Mulholland, SFO
Chairs, National Peace and Justice Commission
855 N Jefferson Street, Arlington VA 22205
703-524-6017; e-mail dannymai@aol.com

One of the basic ideas behind the theme of Jubilee Justice is restoring right relationships. The idea comes from the very human understanding that, when we are left to ourselves, things start to get out of hand. Before long, our self-interest and sense of self-preservation lead us to start to look for opportunities that will be to our advantage. Once we find them, we would be foolish not to take them. Part of this pattern of behavior comes from our very nature, and the need to survive as individuals, families, tribes, clans, and nations. Part of it comes from our forgetting that survival works much better in community than individually.

Once the situation is in place, it is very hard for the unfortunate ever to re-establish their fortune.

The Jews of old saw that, over the course of a couple of generations, things changed enough that relationships within the community changed. A

neighbor's hard times might provide the opportunity to increase the size of one's own farmland, and it might even appear helpful to take the neighbor family in as workers on the new land; their misfortune is now to our advantage. Once the situation is in place, it is very hard for the unfortunate ever to re-establish their fortune. It becomes even less advantageous for the fortunate to let them. This would now be viewed as a loss of what is "rightfully ours". This thinking becomes even more true for the next generation, who have grown up with an expanded property and indentured servants as part of what is normal.

In an agrarian society, the early Jews also observed that fields need to lie fallow every seven years to recover and be productive again. This may be why seven was considered a lucky number as it could restore fruitfulness. The biggest restoration would be seven times seven, sort of implying cycles within cycles. The agrarian model may have spread out to include a time when other things were restored as well. So the concept of the year of Jubilee grew, wherein relationships within the community would be restored by forgiving debt, by restoring property, and by releasing those in servitude from their bondage. The community can now start over anew.



While this all sounds well and good, it wasn't recorded how successful this was with those people who had acquired all the additional wealth, or how willing they were to restore any of it. But the concept came down as a high ideal as well as an idea that made sense for the sake of the community. The idea regained momentum in the 1300's, when the Church proclaimed the first Year of Jubilee, but without the totally radical restoration process involved. Now at the turn of the Millennium, we are in a year of Jubilee, and the Church is stressing the concept of Jubilee with special indulgences for those who make pilgrimages during the year, and calling on world leaders to consider Jubilee Justice.

In our last century, much progress was made in human civilization, and, at the end of the Millennium, we have seen rapid changes in technology and also in the accumulation of wealth. We have seen that, for a vast number of people, the bottom line isn't God or family or community, but rather what brings wealth to the stockholders most rapidly. We have seen mergers of companies so they can become even bigger and have an even stronger say in how wealth is accumulated for themselves, and, because they weren't considered profitable enough, we have seen the destruction of small, self-sustaining companies that would support communities. We have seen jobs go overseas to other countries, where the labor is cheaper and less hampered by expensive forms of worker compensation, so the bottom line can be maintained. We have seen that greed is the driving force in our society, and is manifested in many different aspects of our current culture.

It is good to have a call for Jubilee Justice at this time in our Church and our world, and in particular for our society. We need to restore right relations with the developing countries and those that we have directly or indirectly exploited for the last several centuries, including our current era. It is a good time to restore right relationships.



Thank you, John Poppeliers!

Bill Wicks, SFO

John Poppeliers, SFO has had to resign his position as Chair of the National Ecology Commission for health reasons. He has agreed to continue as a member of the Commission. As everyone knows, John's spirit is with Ecology issues. John's contribution to our Secular Franciscan Order has included his participation at the 1997 Quinquennial Congress in Delaware, and helping in the planning of the All Commissions Conference which took place at Saint Bonaventure University in June of last year. John, you are in our prayers.

One of the basic ideas behind the theme of Jubilee Justice is restoring right relationships.

Membership Definition

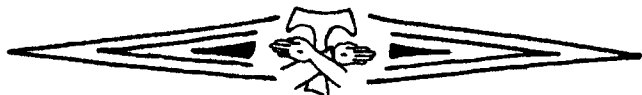
We have been contacted by the Executive Council and asked to publish the following in hope that it will clarify any questions you might have about the annual per capita donation made to NAFRA by the Regions:

The Per Capita Donation is based on the number of active and excused professed members, but not lapsed members, that you have. The following guidelines which have been approved by the Executive Council and published in the newsletter (Winter, 1991, page 15), are to be used.

"For purposes of reporting ... local fraternity membership to NAFRA, the following definitions should be used:

'An active fraternity member is one who participates both by attending fraternity meetings and by providing financial support to the community; one who does not attend fraternity meetings, either on a temporary or permanent basis, but does provide financial support to the community, or one who neither attends meetings nor supports the community financially, but whom the fraternity has excused from such obligations.

'Professed Secular Franciscans who do not attend meetings, nor support the community financially, and who, after personal invitations to return to fraternity, reject or ignore the invitation, will be termed lapsed and will not be carried on the fraternity's membership rolls nor be reported as members to NAFRA.'"



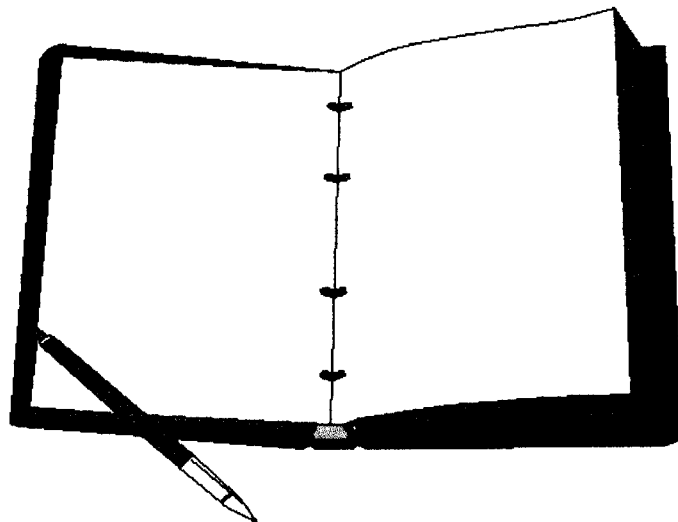
QUINQUENNIAL CONGRESS

2002

**LOYOLA UNIVERSITY
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA
JULY 9TH THROUGH 14TH
PLEASE MARK YOUR
CALENDAR**

How Voltaire Helped Write the Pauline Rule

Anneta Duveen, SFO



After twelve years of commissions appointed to rewrite the Third Order Secular Franciscan Rule - each one meeting and disbanding without result - 1976 marked the year of still another attempt to rewrite the *Rule*. The new commission was to meet in Rome. I was then serving as National Minister of the SFO in the United States, and was appointed by the Minister General, Manuela Mattioli, and the International Presidency, to represent Secular Franciscans in the English-speaking nations.

There were about thirty participants at the conclave, including Franciscan historians, Assistants General, canon lawyers, international language representatives, and members of the International Presidency. The proceedings began on a Monday morning, and were scheduled to end on the Friday of that week. In the pattern of the previous twelve years, paralysis reigned.

As the only American, I stood before the meeting and shocked those present by declaring, "If Voltaire could write 'Candide' in three days without the Sacraments, I don't see why we can't write the new *Rule* with the benefit of the Sacraments. If we return to our countries without completing the *Rule*, the damage to our reputations will be irreparable."

Teaming up with Assistant General Antonio Provenzano, TOR, we decided to pray to Father Bruno Currier, TOR, who died of leukemia a year after his ordination, and Father Provenzano's mother, who had recently died, to help us complete the *Rule* by Friday.

Urged forward by the Ministers General of the Friars, the Commission went back to work with a new sense of purpose and direction. Sure enough, by Friday the proposed *Rule* was completed. With only minor alterations, it was this *Rule* that His Holiness Pope Paul VI, a Third Order Secular Franciscan, promulgated with the Seal of the Fisherman on June 24, 1978.

Voltaire wrote scathingly about Saint Francis, so it is ironic that he was at least indirectly involved in galvanizing the Commission to complete its task.

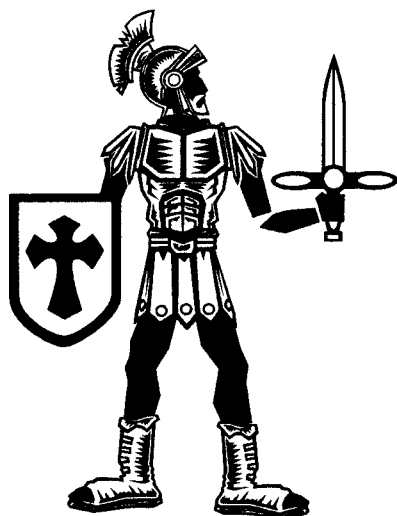
The Armor of the Gospel

Deacon Ric Nagle, SFO, Minister,
Five Franciscan Martyrs Region

The Franciscan Vocation is a very important element in our faith journey, both in challenge and in decision. In the Gospel and Sacred Scripture, we see repeatedly that we are to be the voice for the widow and orphan, to care for the needy and hungry, to pray for and bless our neighbors. To do this work we need the balance of regular contact with God, in prayer, contemplation, and by turning our minds and hearts to Him. In the Scriptures we are reminded repeatedly that victory in battles is not won by our own swords or our right hands. God molds us and fashions us to be instruments for His mission and the coming of His kingdom. Christ constantly uses lowly and humble strategies against seemingly insurmountable opponents, and His messengers are grossly inadequate by human standards. His work is always accomplished with exquisite timing and astounding perfection. Our needs are cared for before we even know what our needs are.

My dear brothers and sisters, to say we are Christians, let alone Secular Franciscans, and then stand in the vineyard of the Lord and do no more than the minimal is like the priest and the Levite who pass by the injured victim in the Parable of the Good Samaritan. We pass by all in need, and neglect much work even in the Church without even a glance.

Christ's own words say that we did not choose Him but that He chose us. By saying we are unworthy or inadequate is tantamount to saying that God does not know what He is doing. To put on the armor of the Gospel life and then sit on a tree stump on the way to battle is defeating the whole purpose of our calling. Never cease praying, put on the armor of the Gospel, and do not let your hearts grow faint, for Christ is our High Priest, and has paved the way.



*"Let us go and search for Him.
Let us be three fools of the East,
Let us leave the good red blaze to
ride in the night."*

from *Epiphany – A Travel Song*, Mother Mary Francis, PC

Junipero Serra Region Certifies Spiritual Animators

Mary Mazotti, SFO



In February of this year Junipero Serra Region certified seven SFO Spiritual Animators during Mass on the weekend of its Chapter of Elections. In attendance were Bill Wicks, SFO, National Minister, and Loren Connell, OFM, for the elections and Pastoral Visitation. The seven Seculars completed the one-year course of study entitled "Life-Giving Union", a correspondence course designed to prepare and certify spiritual assistants and animators for Secular Franciscan fraternities. The course was established because, according to the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants, "the demand for spiritual assistants and animators is far greater than the availability of Franciscan religious and diocesan clergy".

The newly certified SFO Animators for Junipero Serra Region are: Claire Breene, SFO; Mary Carson, SFO; Donna Marquez, SFO; Mary Mazotti, SFO; Mary Lou McDonald, SFO; Marguerite Stein, SFO; and Anne Twitchell, SFO. The course was mentored by the Region's Conference of Spiritual Assistants: Friars Robert Brady, OFM; Stephen Gross, OFM Conv.; Camillus MacRory, OFM Cap.; and Ponchie Vasquez, OFM.

During their first meeting to discuss the course, mentors and Seculars chose to make the course more personalized and fraternal by meeting quarterly in a member's home. Each friar was assigned one or two Seculars to mentor, review monthly lessons, and offer comments and encouragement. During the meetings, everyone present shared in the lesson discussions, in ways both general and personal, inspiring and benefiting one another. Although this particular course is completed, all agreed that there would be benefit in meeting again at various times, to study areas which are important to the role of Spiritual Assistants and Spiritual Animators. Secular Franciscans who are interested in taking the correspondence course should contact a friar of their Region's Conference of Spiritual Assistants.

National Formation Commission Meets



The National Formation Commission met at the Serra Retreat Center in Malibu, CA, from March 19 – 21. Pictured above, left to right, are: Dorothy Palzinski, SFO, Anne Mulqueen, SFO, Teresa Baker, SFO, Loris Morrissey, SFO, and Commission Chairs Deacon Dave and Thérèse Ream, SFO. Absent from the photo was the Commission's Spiritual assistant and friar member, Father Richard Trezza, OFM.

This was the first meeting of the Commission for Dorothy, Anne, and Loris, who were appointed in October 1999.

Dave points out: "the spirit of our Seraphic father Saint Francis can be seen hovering in the background, extending his blessing on the Commission and its work."



Web Site Launches

- The National Formation Commission now has a web site located at <http://www.nafra-sfo.org/formation/>
- Jean Kennedy, SFO, Minister of Santa Maria de las Montañas Region announces that their regional newsletter is now on-line at <http://www.frii.com/~jksfo/>
- La Verna Region has launched a web site at <http://www.rc.net/sfo/laverna/>
- 'Ohana O Ke Anuenue Region's website is at <http://listserv.american.edu/catholic/franciscan>



**"DISORDER IN SOCIETY
IS THE RESULT OF
DISORDER IN THE FAMILY."**

Saint Angela Merici

Family Matters

Sonia and Jaime Bernardo, SFO
Chairs, National Family Commission
11704 Veirs Mill Road, Silver Springs, MD 20902
301-933-2487; e-mail: jsbernardo@aol.com

One of the major concerns of parents in this country is lack of time. Is time really shrinking? Absolutely not. There are and will always be 60 minutes in an hour, 24 hours in a day, 7 days in a week. When we remind our children of the tasks they have to do, and they respond with "we don't have time", we tell them "yes, you have time. You just have to prioritize. Do the important things first". Even the Council on Families in America and the Council on Civil Society have learned that the primary concern of parents in America is time. "Increasingly, American parents believe that they are losing their children to an excessively materialistic and violent culture." (Chicago Studies, Spring 2000)

That is the sad thing about society today – the desire of many families to acquire more and more material things "to make us happy", to "get ahead". To achieve this goal, men work harder and longer than their parents did. More and more women also work as many hours, if not longer, outside the home. So who is left to show love, to guide, to nurture the children? Grandparents, if they have the time, young baby sitters who "need the money", older siblings who think it is unfair to be given such a responsibility. When parents come home from work, they are too exhausted even to prepare dinner, much less help with school work or read to young children. They have no time. Nothing is left to give, but children are showered with toys in lieu of TLC on paydays! They are left with more things than hours with parents.

No wonder we have shootings in schools and even in churches. According to a recent study, shootings are the most common cause of violent death in schools. On a TV show, parents were asked who was responsible for this violence. They were unanimous in their answer: "We are!" Elayne Bennett, founder of Best Friends, a youth development program in Maryland which fosters self-respect and sexual abstinence for teenage girls, stressed that the answers to many of society's ills rest with parents. "Keep communications open", she urged parents, especially with your teenagers.

If time is the most important and expensive commodity, then families should prioritize. A family who chooses more time for each other, rather than more money, is happier, closer, more attuned to each other's needs, more satisfied. Husbands and wives should spend time with each other, away from their children, at least once a month, to reaffirm their love for each other. The greatest gift you can give to your children is the love you have for your spouse. Children become secure and confident knowing that their parents' relationship is intact and secure. Spending time alone with your child, even for a short time once a week, builds a strong relationship. Go out for a walk, have lunch together, or even just sit in the park and be present to each other. Let us remember that if time is gold, so are our children.

Finances and Fraternity

Fr. Ben Brevoort, OFM Cap

This is the final installment of this article, which has been published in four parts.

6. How to increase income?

One needs to be creative and to involve the whole fraternity.

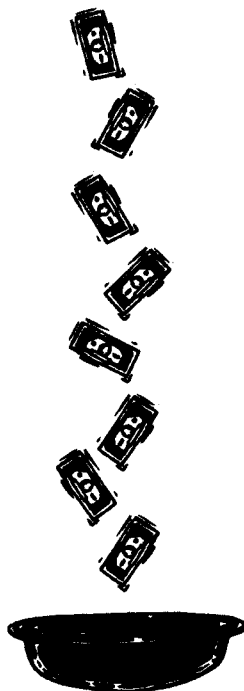
A very common method is to have a free and secret collection, where each member offers a contribution according to his or her own means. This is effective on condition that the members know the needs of the fraternity, support its programs, are ready to cover the relevant financial expenditures and trust their council and their treasurer.

In the absence of these conditions, many fraternities have established a fixed contribution to be paid periodically. Some of them consider this contribution obligatory, others as a guideline or a minimum which can be supplemented by free gifts. This is the normal way at all higher levels: regional, national and international.

The existence of this method, however, often indicates a lack of solidarity and co-responsibility for the life of the fraternity. Whenever a council needs to insist and impose sanctions, more or less severe, to obtain some result, it needs to ask itself why this approach is necessary. The main reason is almost never economic poverty or insufficient financial means of the members of the fraternity. At the local level, the main reason will often be a lack of financial transparency of the council, or a lack of trust by the members in the financial management of the secular members of the council. At the higher levels, the cause is often a lack of information or insistence on part of the council at the higher level, and, on part of the lower level, a poor sense of involvement or responsibility to contribute to the

functioning of the fraternities at the higher levels. It is of course also true that any fraternity which does not manage to finance itself, will find it very difficult to contribute to the functioning of its immediate higher level.

Other possibilities, above all at the local level, are to start together some money earning activities. Many African fraternities have a common field, cultivated by the members together, and use its harvest for the fraternity fund. Other fraternities have a workshop and organize fairs, or make bricks for sale, wash cars, sell tickets for local soccer matches, guard parked cars, organize bingo parties or song festivals, sell sweets or cakes on the steps of the church or prepare local take-home dishes, etc.



One needs to help the members to see their financial involvement in a more concrete way. There are members who have designated a tree to be the "SFO tree": all its fruits will go to the SFO. Others have declared a chicken or a goat to be of the SFO. They look after it, sell the eggs or the milk and give this once a month to the fraternity.

Other members before every meal they prepare take a spoonful of rice or tapioca and put this aside. At the end of the month, this is sold and the money given to the fraternity. I know a medical doctor who puts aside for the SFO the fee he receives from the first patient he treats on the first Monday of the month. Others have earmarked a certain per-thousand of their salary for the SFO.



"To go in a spirit of prayer from one place to another, from one city to another, in the area marked especially by God's intervention, helps us not only to live our life as a journey, but also gives us a vivid sense of a God Who has gone before us and leads us on, Who Himself set out on man's path, a God Who does not look down on us from on high, but Who became our traveling companion."

Pope John Paul II, from a June 1999 letter to all those preparing to celebrate the Great Jubilee of 2000

Commission Chairs Needed

The National Executive Council invites Secular Franciscans to submit resumés for the positions of **National Ecology Commission Chair** and **National Work Commission Chair**. Applicants must:

- have active Secular Franciscan status (must provide copy of Certificate of Profession);
- be familiar with the Mission Statement and goals of the applicable national commission;
- be willing to communicate your passion and desire to promote the Commission to others;
- provide on-going Formation articles for TAU-USA;
- provide a summary of some of your ideas to promote the Commission; and
- be able to attend at least two four-day national meetings yearly.

Interested Secular Franciscans should mail resumés by September 1, 2000 to:

Carol Gentile, SFO
Coordinator, National Apostolic Commissions
136 Woods Avenue
Monaca, PA 15061

Phone 724-775-4248
E-mail: gentilesfo@hotmail.com



National Archivist Needed



The National Executive Council invites qualified Secular Franciscans to submit resumés for the position of **National Fraternity Archivist**. This is a volunteer position. Applicants must:

- have active Secular Franciscan status (must provide copy of Certificate of Profession);
- provide a list of experiences as an archivist; and
- include a telephone number for a personal interview.

Interested Secular Franciscans should mail resumés by December 31, 2000 to:

Mary Mazotti, SFO
P.O. Box 2571
Arnold, CA 95223-2571
Phone: 209-795-3809
E-mail: mkmaz@goldrush.com

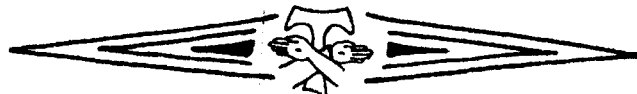
National Public Relations Director Needed

The National Executive Council invites qualified Secular Franciscans to submit resumés for the position of **National SFO Public Relations Director**. Recommended requirements are:

- active Secular Franciscan status (must provide copy of Certificate of Profession);
- knowledge of Secular Franciscan matters, including structure, and role in the Church;
- experience with creating interesting and newsworthy press releases for Catholic newspapers, radio, television, and web-sites (sample releases required);
- experience in interviewing and accurate reporting;
- experience in video recording;
- ability to communicate effectively with editors, and meet their requirements and deadlines;
- basic clerical skills; and
- experiences or education which would enable the applicant to effectively report on and promote the Secular Franciscan Order.

Interested Seculars should mail resumés and samples by September 1, 2000 to:

Bill Wicks, SFO
3307 Quail Meadows Drive
Santa Maria, CA 93455.



Youth Commission Members Needed

The National Youth/Young Adult Commission invites Secular Franciscans to submit resumés for membership on the **National Youth Commission**. Applicants must:

- have active Secular Franciscan status (must provide copy of Certificate of Profession);
- be familiar with the Mission Statement and goals of the Youth Commission;
- have some experience in working with youth as a leader (for example, Franciscan youth groups, parish youth groups, CCD, Scouts, etc.);
- be able to work with, and share ideas on starting and animating Franciscan Youth groups; and
- be able to attend one National Commission weekend meeting annually.

The Commission encourages multi-cultural candidates to apply. Interested Secular Franciscans should mail resumés by August 31, 2000 to:

Anthony and Mary Mazotti, SFO
Co-Chairs, National Youth/Young Adult Commission
P.O. Box 2571
Arnold, CA 95223-2571
Phone: 209-795-3809
E-mail: mkmaz@goldrush.com

Franciscan Formation Materials Made Available by the National Formation Commission

Catch Me A Rainbow Too! Ideal for Initial and Ongoing Formation! NEW SPIRAL-BOUND FORMAT!

Bach, Lester, OFM Cap. (1999). \$16.00 per copy, plus \$4.50 P&H; P&H is \$5.50 for 2, \$7.00 for 3. 10 or more copies is \$12.80 per copy, plus P&H.

Gospel Living Every Day of Our Lives: A Formation Guide To The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order. Baker, Teresa V., SFO. (1994). 5 1/2" x 8 1/2", 131 pages. \$10.00 per copy, plus \$4.50 P&H; P&H is \$5.50 for 2, \$7.00 for 3; 10 or more copies is \$8.00 per copy plus P&H.

Elements Of Formation: A Reflection on the Formation Process. (1995). 8 1/2" x 11", 38 pages. \$5.00 per copy, plus \$3.50 P&H; P&H is \$5.00 for 2, and \$6.50 for 3; 25 or more copies is \$4.00 per copy plus P&H.

Formation Resource List. (1997). 8 1/2"x 11", 3 hole drilled, 66 pages. \$7.50 per copy, plus \$3.50 P&H; P&H is \$5.00 for 2, \$6.50 for 3; 10 or more copies \$6.00 per copy, plus P&H.

Guia Para la Formación Inicial en la Orden Franciscana Seglar de Los Estados Unidos. (1987). 8 1/2" x 11", 41 pages. \$5.00 per copy, plus \$3.50 P&H; P&H is \$5.00 for 2, and \$6.50 for 3; 25 or more copies is \$4.00 per copy plus P&H.

A Guide For Franciscan Youth / Young Adult Ministry. (1998). 8 1/2" x 11", 84 pages. \$8.50 per copy, plus \$3.50 P&H; P&H is \$5.00 for 2, \$6.50 for 3; 10 or more copies is \$6.80 per copy, plus P&H.

Guidelines for Initial Formation in the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States. (1986). 8 1/2"x 11", 38 pages. \$5.00 per copy, plus \$3.50 P&H; P&H is \$5.00 for 2, and \$6.50 for 3; 25 or more copies is \$4.00 per copy, plus P&H.

Handbook For Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership. (1998). 8 1/2" X 11", 3 hole drilled, 137 pages plus Formation Resource List as a 58 page appendix. \$22.50 per copy, plus \$4.50 P&H; P&H is \$5.50 for 2, \$7.00 for 3; 10 or more copies is \$18.00 per copy, plus P&H.

The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order. (1997). 5" x 3" red presentation edition, 40 pages. 10 books for only \$18.40 (includes P&H).

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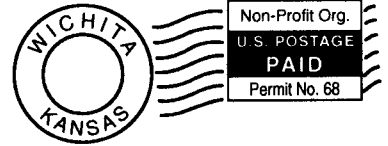
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