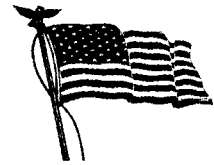


TAU-USA



Issue Number 37

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

Summer 2001

Where Are We Now?

William Wicks, SFO, National Minister

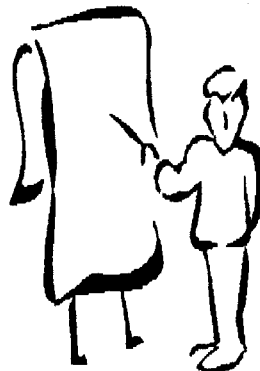
First, I wish to thank each of you in leadership for the time, dedication, and hard work that you have given for the brothers and sisters of our beloved Secular Franciscan Order. We have made progress, and I feel it is time for us to take stock of some of the past accomplishments that I have observed, and to share some of our goals. I believe that the time is right for an assessment of the events of the past three years – something like a “State of the Order” address.

Regional restructuring of the Order was completed in October, 1997. Presently, the majority of regions are functioning very well as regional fraternities; some regions are even divided into areas, or districts, for greater efficiency. My term of service as National Minister began in October, 1997, following a very successful Quinquennial Congress in Delaware. In June of 1999, an extraordinarily productive All Commissions Conference was held at Saint Bonaventure University. Many regions have repeated this model by hosting their own regional ACC gatherings. Regional communications have been vastly improved with the publication of excellent newsletters. E-mail has come into its own as a means of communication among fraternities at all levels. (I spend more than two hours each day writing and answering official e-mail.) The Executive Council conducts official business via the Internet. We also have a first-class web site that includes links to each of the commissions, the regions, and various Franciscan sources. I receive, on the average, one request per day from inquirers who have accessed the site. I refer them to our Vocation Director. Our national newsletter, *TAU-USA*, is a first class publication, that includes articles written by the commission chairs. These articles include ongoing formation ideas for local fraternities, news about regional activities, and spiritual articles. Last May, the Franciscan Yosemite Experience was enjoyed by both Secular Franciscans and Friars. The Apostolic Commissions are actively involved in making manifest Chapters 15 through 18 of our Rule of Life. The Family Commission has begun e-mailing the publication *Living By Faith* to each Regional Minister, that they may forward it to the fraternities in their region for distribution to the infirm and the homebound. The Formation Commission is in the process of approving a pre-Inquiry orientation program. The per capita contributions that

you provide are well used, and are well accounted for by your National Treasurer. Our International Councilor continues to be our interface with the International Fraternity. Archiving processes have begun, so that our records and history can be stored for posterity.

We continue to value our life-giving union with the Friars, especially as *Spiritual Assistants* and as *co-journeymen*; and we are stepping up our interface with the other members of the Franciscan family: the Franciscan religious sisters and the Poor Clares. The Franciscan Family Council, which includes a representative of each branch of the Franciscan family, was formed to help bring about family unity, and to seek out ways in which we can collaborate. The Ecumenical Committee was formed to help promote, wherever possible, fraternal relations with non-Catholic groups inspired by Saint Francis. This includes our continuing relationship with the Third Order Society of Saint Francis (Anglican Franciscans). We have appointed a Public Relations Director to help promote our presence and our activities. Through the generosity of Saint John the Baptist friar province we have been able to use money from the Duns Scotus Secular Franciscan Formation Trust Fund for such activities as regional retreats, regional All Commission Conferences, the development of a national database, and SALT team presentations. Members of the SALT team are bringing spirit and life to regions and local fraternities. The Youth and Young Adult Commission has progressed very well after starting from scratch. The Multicultural Committee, which includes SFO members representing various races and ethnic groups, has the responsibility of making us knowledgeable and respectful of the spiritual richness of the various cultures. We have a liaison to Franciscans International, a first class NGO at the United Nations,

which brings Franciscan values to that body. The SFO spiritual animator program, “Life Giving Union”, has been initiated; many have completed the program and have been certified. This new program is designed to compensate for the shortage of friars by making available trained certified Secular Franciscans to provide spiritual assistance to local fraternities. Traveling Spiritual Assistant workshops have been quite successful in training those who do provide assistance to the local fraternities. The Formation Commission works with the Conference of



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TAU-USA
c/o Mr. and Mrs. Antony Outhwaite, SFO
6 Light Street
Mountaintop, PA 18707-9415
e-mail: tauusa@netzero.net

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Dolores Smelko, SFO
RD 1, Box 155
Anita, PA 15711

e-mail: deesmelko@penn.com

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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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Visit the National Fraternity website at
<http://www.nafra-sfo.org>

“The Fervor and Readiness of That First Day...”

Thérèse and Deacon David Ream, SFO
Chairs, National Formation Commission
Umbria, RR3, Orrick Road, Kirksville, MO 63501
660-627-5626; e-mail: umbria2@earthlink.net

In this issue of *TAU-USA*, the National Commission Chairs continue to unfold their reflections on this year's general theme of "New Beginnings", by focusing on the second major developmental life stage: youth and young adulthood. All around us in the Church, we are surrounded by the Neophytes, those women and men who were received into the Church during the great Easter celebration, and who experience during the fifty glorious days of Easter a period of mystagogia, of deepened reflection upon the Paschal Mystery of Christ and upon their own insertion into this Mystery. *Enthusiastic, fired-up, zealous, Spirit-filled* – words such as these are frequently used to describe newcomers to the faith, this band of believers called “young Catholics”, regardless of their chronological age.

The same holds true for our neophyte Secular Franciscans, those newly professed or recently professed into the Order. Article #44.2 of the officially approved year 2000 revision of the General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order states that “The Fraternity has the duty to give special attention to the formation of the newly professed and of the temporary professed, to help them become fully mature in their vocation and develop a true sense of belonging” (provisional translation). The challenge for our fraternities is to balance the need to recognize and utilize our new members' gifts and talents with the need to allow them the time and space for continued mentoring and growth into the Franciscan way of life. How many of our newly professed brothers and sisters end up being elected Minister of their fraternities soon after profession, only to become overworked and burned out shortly thereafter? Then their youthful zeal and enthusiasm may quickly disappear as they themselves disappear from the active life of the fraternity! The seed of a vocation planted by the Lord through us during initial formation can thus be uprooted and destroyed rather than cared for and nurtured.

Sometimes we can attempt to use our “youth”, and the relative lack of meaningful experience that often accompanies it, as an excuse or a cop-out for wishing not to assume responsibility for being the living and active presence of Christ in the Church and in the world to which our Secular Franciscan identity calls us. We may be tempted to respond to our call as did the prophet Jeremiah initially:

“Ah, Lord God!” I said, “I know not how to speak; I am too young.” But the Lord answered me, “Say not, ‘I am too young.’ To whomever I send you, you shall go; whatever I command you, you shall speak. Have no fear before them, because I am with you to deliver you.”

Jeremiah 1: 6-8

The Old Testament provides us with ample examples of the Lord calling forth youth, and accomplishing His plan through their zeal and enthusiasm. We are told that Daniel was only a young boy when he came to the defense of Susanna, who was falsely accused of adultery by two wicked, lecherous elders (cf. Daniel 13: 1-64). Samuel was merely a boy when the Lord called him to the office of prophet (cf. 1 Samuel 3: 1-18). The shepherd David, “ruddy, a youth handsome to behold and making a splendid appearance” (1 Samuel 16: 12), was the youngest of all Jesse's sons when the Lord chose and anointed him to be king of Israel.

The New Testament continues this same pattern. It was a young man who approached our Lord with the question, “Teacher, what good must I do to possess everlasting life?” (Matthew 19: 16) and sadly left Jesus because he could not bear to part with his riches. In his account of the arrest of Jesus at Gethsemani, the evangelist Mark tells us of “a young man following [Jesus] who was covered by nothing but a linen cloth” (Mark 14: 51). The apostle Paul urges Timothy to preach and teach with confidence, relying on the gifts and the mission God has bestowed on him, and allowing no one to look down on him because of his youth (cf. 1 Timothy 4: 12). Recall that the Lord Jesus Himself was a relatively young man of 30 or 31 years of age when he undertook his public mission to proclaim the good news of the Reign of God, to suffer, to die, and to rise again in glory. Even our Seraphic Father Francis received and offered his initial response to the Lord's call to repentance and conversion while he was a youth.

What does all this mean for us? Perhaps this: each one of us is called to stir up the ardor of our youth in responding to the Lord's dynamic call to be Gospel-centered people in the Church and in the world, to incarnate the Franciscan presence and charism today. If we truly believe what we profess so emphatically with the Church especially during the Easter season, that our Lord Jesus Christ is risen from the dead, how can we refrain from being enthusiastic in living our faith and our Franciscan vocation? In the Renewal of Commitment which we are encouraged to celebrate on the anniversary of our profession as Secular Franciscans, we pray that the Lord “will allow us to experience once again the fervor and readiness of that first day when we entered the fraternity” (Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order, page 31). May we allow these words to express our youthful response to the gift of our vocation each and every day of our Franciscan lives!

Sisters and brothers, may God give you youthful zeal!



A World Transformed in Christ

Justin Carisio, SFO

Chair, National Ecology Commission

2508 Oakfield, Wilmington, DE 19810

302-478-6593; e-mail: carisio@yahoo.com

"All things are said to be transformed in the transfiguration of Christ, in as far as something of each creature was transfigured in Christ. For as a human being, Christ has something in common with all creatures. With the stone he shares existence; with plants he shares life; with animals he shares sensation; and with the angels he shares intelligence. Therefore, all things are said to be transformed in Christ since – in his human nature – he embraces something of every creature in himself when he is transfigured." (Bonaventure - *Sermo I, Dom II in Quad. IX, 215-219*)

"New Beginnings" is the theme of the National Commission Chairs this year. It offers an opportunity to renew our understanding of the apostolic focal points of our way of life, using as a figure the progression of an individual through life. This season, we are considering "youth and young adulthood".

A young person's life is centered on the home and on relationships with family, friends, and neighbors. As we grow, we come to understand that these relationships are indispensable to our well-being, and that we have a role to play in making our home a happy, healthy community of love. We also realize that the household funds must cover many different needs, and our allowance is only one of them. We discover we are not the center of the universe; that other people matter too.

This is an analogy for the ecology apostolate. Ecology is the study of the relationships between living things and their environment. The root of the word "ecology" is the Greek word *oikos* which means "home". It is the same root for our word "economy." In a very real sense, ecology is about "home economics".

We have two homes. One home is the earth where we live, work, and establish families. The earth is sacred. Each creature, by simply living, or, as with the stones, by simply being, lives in perfect obedience and praise of God. (The exceptions are those of us with free will, who may choose to obey and praise God, or not.) Saint Francis taught this in his *Canticle*. Moreover, the above quotation from Saint Bonaventure instructs that Jesus' Transfiguration, all creatures, animate and inanimate, are transformed. In Christ, all creatures are kin.

The Transfiguration also reminds us that we have a second home, a spiritual home. Pope John Paul II, in *Cristifidelis laici*, says that the lay faithful, through our baptism, are "engrafted" onto the Body of Christ. As sister or brother to Jesus, we participate in the life of the Trinity. Henri Nouwen called the Trinity the "House of Love". The Trinity is our other home.

The economics of our two homes are strikingly different. In our earthly home, we operate according to physical laws and market forces. We consume resources, create waste, buy and sell, cultivate and manufacture. We can manage the economy of this home selfishly and blindly,

or with compassion for others and for God's creation. As Franciscans, that choice is conditioned by the economy of our spiritual home. The economy of the Trinity is love. When we permit the economy of our Trinitarian home to penetrate the economy of our earthly home, the result is an imperative that we call justice.

Four billion of the world's six billion people live on less than \$1500.00 per year. For them to live like the average American would require the resources of three additional earths. Are we overspending our allowance? What will the earth be like for the generations who come after us? If we want peace, we must work for justice. In the 21st century, if we want justice, we must find a way to live in an ecologically sustainable manner. This is the source of the ecology apostolate. *It springs from the Gospel life and is integral to our very identity as Christians and Franciscans.*

That is why our *Rule* places ecology squarely within the norm of the Secular Franciscan way of life:

Article 11: Trusting in the Father, Christ chose for Himself and His mother a poor and humble life, even though He valued created things attentively and lovingly. Let the Secular Franciscans seek a proper spirit of detachment from temporal goods by simplifying their own material needs. Let them be mindful that according to the gospel they are stewards of the goods received for the benefit of God's children.

Thus, 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.

Article 18: Moreover they should respect all creatures, animate and inanimate, which "bear the imprint of the Most High", and they should strive to move from the temptation of exploiting creation to the Franciscan concept of universal kinship.

Like the youth, we learn and understand to prepare ourselves to accept responsibility and take action when we come into our mature strength. Next quarter, we will look at what that entails. All the while, rejoice that we are embraced by Christ of the Transfiguration, Whose grace transforms the world!

Questions for discussion:

1. In what ways does the mystery of the Transfiguration offer us hope and strength to live in harmony with creation?
2. Can you think of issues that disrupt our society, which are rooted in choices people make about their material needs and wants?
3. In what ways do you try to make the ecology apostolate part of your life as a Franciscan? Are there areas in which you feel separated from or alienated by the ecology apostolate?



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Youth is a Special Treasure

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

Pope John Paul II refers to youth as a "special treasure". It is a treasure of discovering, selecting, and planning for what lies ahead. For the first time in their lives, young people begin making decisions that will affect not only themselves and those close to them, but society as a whole. They are going to try things that are new to them. They will try to prove to themselves and to others that they can do what the adults are doing because they are not children anymore.

Alexander Schneider, author of *Adolescents and the Challenge of Maturity* wrote: "The teenager is a personality in transition; a swimmer struggling hard, and sometimes desperately, in the stream of life, who has left the shore of childhood and is making his way, slowly and often painfully, to the opposite shore of adulthood." With their newly found independence and freedom come doubts and insecurity.

*Unfortunately,
as we all know,
in today's society,
children and
adolescents face a
troubled society.*

As they gain the power of reasoning, they begin to question their identity. This is the key issue for teenagers – searching for their identity. Who am I? Why am I here? "Having an identity implies two things: first, that they have a clear vision for the values, virtues, ideals, and goals they want to reach now until they die. Secondly, making sure that their daily choices reflect the virtues, values and goals they want to achieve." (*Parenting with Grace*, Gregory Popcak, MSW, LCSW, and Lisa Popcak)

Adolescence is a difficult period mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and physically. They are not only in transition but their lives are full of contradictions. They start to question the adults, especially those who have authority over them. They crave self-esteem, and a sense of belonging. Parents should remember that the adolescents of today are not the same as when they were adolescents.

The Catholic Church recognizes the important contributions of the youth to the Church and to the whole world, both at present and in the future. Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, in his address at World Youth Day in 1990, said, "Our young people with their various cultural heritages are a sign of God's bountiful creation; they bring a dynamic energy to the life of the Church. We... must listen to them, to affirm their giftedness and cultural heritage, to share Christ's message with them, and enable them to be active disciples in our faith community."

The motto of the Third World Meeting of the Pontifical Council for the Family in October 2000 is "children are

the springtime of the family and society". What does this mean?

Spring brings to us different colors of life, of songs, and plants that start to bloom and continually blossom. Children are like that. When they are born they

bring a message of life, of new creation, like a new flower that blooms and grows when nourished with tender love and care. The role of the parents is to nurture their children, so that they will continually be molded in the image and likeness of God.

Unfortunately, as we all know, in today's society, children and adolescents face a troubled society. Families face a real challenge in trying to nurture the full human and spiritual growth of their children. There is an "over-emphasis on the 'masculine values' – toughness, power, control, and winning", which produces "violent persons and a society that seeks to solve problems through force". Franciscan families that we are, how can we obey Saint Francis' call to be peacemakers? How can Franciscan families become the instruments of peace at this crucial stage? The National Conference of Catholic Bishops stated that children hear the Gospel message first from their parents. They need to see this message lived in action, not only in words. So adults need to show how to make peace with one another, to apologize when they have hurt their children in some way, to make amends with one another. In the spirit of Saint Francis, parents can show their care for the poor and for the environment.

Let us follow the example of the *family of Nazareth*, who had an important mission to perform. They, too, traveled the same path as we all do – with joys and pains, happiness and sorrows, plenty of work, hope amid trials and difficulties, but always rooted in faithfulness to God's will. The family is the first community where God forms young people, and molds them in His image and likeness. Family life activities and family relationships deepen the family members' union with God. The ordinary daily happenings at home are the threads that weave the pattern of holiness with the help of the Holy Spirit that works through them.

*Let us follow the
example of the
family of
Nazareth...*

Questions for Discussion:

1. How can parents help their adolescent son or daughter develop his or her own identity?
2. How can parents help their children achieve a solid, Catholic identity?
3. Knowing that an adolescent is mostly too old to be told what to do, but too young to be left alone, how can families help them make respectful choices?



Francis and Clare and their Adolescent "Crises"

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

Developmental psychologist, Erik H. Erikson, believed that each individual passes through eight developmental stages as they grow from infancy to old age. Each stage, according to Erikson, is characterized by a different psychological "crisis", which must be resolved before the person can move on to the next stage.

During adolescence, the crisis is identity. It is the time when we figure out who we are. The healthy resolution to this adolescent identity crisis is achievement of a firm sense of self. Some years after Erikson developed his well-known theory, Robert Havighurst expanded on the tasks of adolescence, describing eleven developmental tasks of normal adolescence. Like Erikson, Havighurst posited the crucial task of developing a personal sense of identity. He went further, adding other tasks including adopting a personal value system, and developing stable and productive peer relationships.

How did the adolescent years of Francis and Clare reflect these stages and tasks?

Saint Francis grew up in a comfortable merchant family. His adolescence was spent with his friends at play. Murray Bodo, OFM, and Susan Saint Sing, in their book *A Retreat with Francis and Clare*, have Francis describe his adolescence in this way: "My youth was one of relative luxury, of gaiety and music. My consuming ambition was to be a knight like the legendary knights-errant of King Arthur's court." In truth, Francis was twenty years old when he went off to Perugia and was imprisoned. He did not really have his first conversion experience until he was twenty-two, when he realized a deep sense of emptiness that was to be filled with an all-consuming passion for God.

As we reflect on Francis' adolescence, he seems like so many teenagers today, dreaming about heading in one direction, and only subconsciously having experiences that are later understood to have profoundly shaped their identities. During those years, when he worked in his father's store, Francis saw the power of wealth, and the sharp contrast between those who could purchase fancy cloth and the beggar outside the door. His own identity and

personal value system were being influenced, even though he did not make conscious decisions to act on these influences until somewhat later in his life.

In marked contrast to Francis, Clare seems to have experienced a very focused and serious adolescence. Bodo and Saint Sing have her express this drive: "Even as a child, I loved to pray and give alms. I felt deeply the pain of the poor, especially the lepers." Clare was very certain about her personal value system as a young teenager when she heard Francis preach. She was very clear about her identity and life's direction when, at age eighteen, on the night of Palm Sunday 1212, she fled from her father's home and was received into religious life by Francis.

She was also very fortunate to be able to have such good relationships as those she had with Francis and with the women who came to live with her, many of them teenagers themselves. In the book *Saint Francis and the Foolishness of God*, Marie Dennis, SFO, Joe Nangle, OFM, Cynthia Moe-Loeboda, and Stuart Taylor discuss the transforming power of friendship. They describe the kinds of relationships Francis and Clare had with each other and with their brothers or sisters as a source of renewal and joy, a source of courage, and also as a place of accountability.

While living through their very different adolescent years, Francis and Clare model for us ways of relating that can help us also to be transformed, and perhaps to help transform. They had grown clear about their own identities and personal values, and they shared deeply with their brothers and sisters. They understood the importance of community as a privileged place for this kind of transforming relationship. In community, they helped each other to grow on their faith journeys and to recognize the unconditional love of God.

We also have all had very different adolescent years, which helped form us and help lead us to become Secular Franciscans. And somehow, we too realized the need for community and the importance of being in fraternity, as part of our ongoing conversion as we work for peace and justice.

Questions for Discussion:

1. How can I learn to celebrate the other, to listen to the others in my life with care and respect? Are the relationships within my fraternity a source of renewal, joy, and courage, and a place of accountability?
2. Francis saw the poor outside when he was behind the counter in his father's store. How do I encounter the poor and marginalized? Do I walk with them, or stay safe behind a real or imaginary "counter"?
3. Thinking back to your own adolescence, can you see some of the influences that help form you as a Franciscan?



A Great Opportunity Right in Our Own Homes

Pauline Cahalan, SFO
Chair, National Work Commission
435-21st S. W.
Mason City, IA 50401
e-mail: paulinesfo@earthlink.net

In my article for the Spring issue of *TAU-USA*, I wrote about rearing younger children to see work as a gift from God – their contribution to helping the home and family work as a loving, caring team. In this issue, the children have aged rapidly into adolescents or young adults. By the time children are teenagers, their needs have expanded considerably. Maybe they really haven't – parents and other relatives have been buying clothes for the children since their birth; the weekly grocery bill included food for them; they got whatever else was necessary or just nice to get. Why, in adolescence, does it seem that they always want something, and there seem to be never-ending requests for money? Part of it, I am convinced, is that, by the time they reach the years thirteen to nineteen, the kinds of things they want fit into the same categories as before – they just cost a lot more. What's a parent to do? I assume most of you set up a system, when the children were young, in which they earned their allowance by doing things to assist the family and make it run smoothly, happily, and healthily. As children hit the teen years, their jobs can graduate to bigger projects that require physical strength, more problem solving skills, and are more challenging. Outside employment is also a possibility, with a certain percentage of each check saved for further education.

If the child was raised to understand that everyone in the home has jobs to do, and is grateful to contribute, that philosophy does not have to change when the teen years roll around. However, it is time for the teen to gradually realize there is much more to work than just their responsibilities at home. They are preparing to become part of a much bigger world, through taking the kinds of courses in school and getting the kinds of grades that will help them to get into a college, university, technical school, or whatever venue of further education they pursue. Prayer needs to be an ongoing, essential part of each child's life, no matter what stage they are in. Teens need to pray about how to live and act as responsible people, who know that there is a future for which they must prepare. Parents should model an understanding of the role which prayer can play in their own and their children's lives. This should also be the subject of multiple discussions between each child/teen and their parents. The teen's major responsibility during adolescence is to develop the ability to make their own decisions, rather than relying solely on the parents. As they mature, and demonstrate their ability to make sound, rational judgments, parental trust increases, and the teen gradually assumes more responsibility for their own lives. Parents are there for support, but not to bail them out each time their decision-making is poor. The fact that actions have consequences is something these kids have been

learning all along. The teen just learns that the older one gets, the more decisions impact others. However, behind all this should be the understanding that they getting the education necessary to do the real job God has planned for

them as an adult. We are God's hands, no matter what our age. Teenagers have a responsibility to understand this. No matter where God places them, education and training are going to be important.

Now, they have their first job in their early twenties. Would it be right for them to carry the idea that their work is a gift to be esteemed into their new workplace? Absolutely. But workplaces are often very stressful. How does seeing work as a gift to be esteemed fit into this picture, when so many co-workers come to work complaining, engaging in office gossip, worrying about who is going to get promoted to what, and what this talk of downsizing is going to mean to them?

Have you ever been around someone who is truly at peace with the fact that God is running the show, and that their role in this performance is to be open to whatever this Big Director has in mind? So what if they are called upon to play a part for which they haven't memorized the lines yet? Do they get flustered, wondering how all this can be happening? No. There is an underlying trust that this is what they are called to do at this time. They already know God will provide a way for it to happen, no matter how improbable it looks.

Cultivating this attitude of trust through prayer is essential. There is so much going on all the time. Things move so fast. We do not always meet people's expectations of us. We feel we need to go down paths that look really scary or impossible for us. Yet, if we are following God's will, and truly making ourselves available to Him, the obstacles move out of the way. It is most amazing to see, and could only be Divine Intervention in action.

It is not easy to esteem work as a gift in our culture. We are asked to be a counter-cultural people. Our father Francis was counter-cultural too. He and his followers used their hands and hearts. They were doing God's work and He protected them. God will protect and guide our teens and young adults if they put Him first in their lives, and take the time to listen for His guidance. A recently published resource may help. It is called "Spirituality @ Work" by Greg Pierce, available from ACTA publications, 1-800-397-2282.

Questions for Discussion:

1. When you interact with teens and young adults, how can you bring the discussion around to work and their feelings about it?
2. If a young person does not esteem work as a gift, could you discuss that with them, helping them to see that we are all God's hands?



New Beginnings – Youth and Young Adults

Kathy Taormina, SFO

Member, National Youth/Young Adult Commission
920 Whitney Drive, Apple Valley, MN 55124
952-997-2243; e-mail: kltso@frontiernet.net

“You don’t frighten me – I have TEENAGERS!” It’s a magnet that I have stuck on my refrigerator, holding a picture of my teenagers jumping on our trampoline. They are acting crazy – in essence, acting like teenagers!

I look at that magnet often, and think how I really don’t fear teenagers, but *fear for* them! The world we live in can be harsh and demanding. Our children grow up way too soon, and grow away from us way too early. Life’s lessons are harder when we have to watch our children face them.

But as I look at the picture of them jumping and frolicking, I see their energy, their love of life, and I stop to think that maybe my fears may actually be a hindrance to them. Do my own fears hold them back from living the lives that God intended for them? Do I want to impress upon them my own ideas to such a degree that I crush their spirit? Because “it’s the way we have always done it” is an answer to many of their questions, am I lowering my

Whether it is a special celebration, a work of charity, or just a monthly meeting that we share with the youths, time spent together will never be wasted, and will always be rewarding.

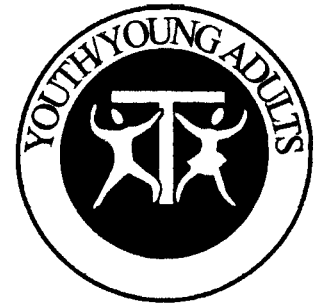
expectations of their intelligence and ability to handle life?

I see my personal feelings expanding into a larger scope when I look at how the Secular Franciscan Order sometimes relates to the youth and young adults. Do our fears bring us to the place where we overcompensate and overprotect our youth? Do we squash their spirit and dull their senses, all in the name of “directing” them? Are we trying to *form* them into *little Franciscans* instead of letting Francis and Clare touch their hearts and minds, and, through their charisma, lead them to Christ?

At this time of new beginnings, can we not let the youth and young adults *form us*? Can we not let their exuberance and vitality for life lead us, and teach us of the pleasures of God? Can we step outside ourselves and open our minds, let alone our ears, and let the youth and young adults share their lives and dreams with us?

In 1995, the SFO was challenged to serve the youth and young adults of the United States. We were commissioned to bring the word of God and the Franciscan spirit to these youths interested in Saint Francis. We were to share, inspire, teach, and

encourage these youths, with all that we hold dear in our Order according to Article 96 of our *General Constitutions*. We were entrusted to walk with them along their journey to Christ, and just maybe, along the way, further our own journeys.



We were asked to help them build a new future, in light of our Franciscan ideals. It takes many people and many events to build a person; no one does it alone. As S. Truett Cathy writes, “It is easier to build boys and girls, than to mend men and women”. But building anything is never a one-sided project. It is a give and take from both sides, a mutual learning experience that evolves into a new and wondrous creation.

We need to take to heart the “new beginnings” theme, and to try to look at the youths in a whole new light. We need not fear gathering them with us because we do not know what to say or what to teach them. Why not let them teach us? We do not need a separate program for them, or a special time or place for them to meet. Sharing our local fraternity’s charisma and apostolates with the youth, as they happen, may be the best way to introduce them to our Franciscan way of life. Article 97 of our *General Constitutions* tells us to seek the most appropriate means to promote this. Whether it is a special celebration, a work of charity, or just a monthly meeting that we share with the youths, time spent together will never be wasted, and will always be rewarding.

In their upcoming newsletters, the Youth/Young Adult Commission will be presenting new ideas, shared experiences, and tried and true methods of incorporating the youth into existing fraternities, or of beginning new youth fraternities. These newsletters will be a new beginning, and will be presented by and given to Secular Franciscans with the hope that we can learn, and thus build, with each other’s help. The newsletters themselves will be a work in progress that we pray will flourish and prosper.

Pope John Paul II stated a Polish proverb at World Youth Day 2000, “If you live with youths, you will become young yourself, I have been rejuvenated!” At a time for new beginnings, rejuvenate yourselves, rejuvenate each other, and rejuvenate our Order! Work with the youths, learn from the youths, love the youths! And remember, don’t be afraid... they’re only teenagers!!!

Questions for Discussion:

1. What do we most want to share with our youths about our Franciscan way of life?
2. What is one event in our local fraternity that we could easily share with youths?
3. What preconceived ideas about youth must our fraternity overcome, so that we can share freely and fully with them?

Where Are We Now?

...continued from front page

National Spiritual Assistants on these workshops. The Peace Award was re-initiated and a winner was selected for 2000. And finally, the amended General Constitutions have been approved, and are accessible through our website at <http://www.nafra-sfo.org>

We have many organizational goals. One is to create a national database. This database is expected to be available for input by the regional and local fraternities in the Autumn of this year. The first use of this database is to make available members' addresses, so that every member of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States, and those friars and religious working with the Seculars who are listed in the database, will receive a free lifetime subscription to *TAU-USA*. Another goal is to make the annual NAFRA meeting a time for the national fraternity council members to meet together and share problems and discuss solutions in an open forum. More time will be allotted at our annual gathering to respond to the needs of the regions, through dialogue sessions. The process will be studied at our June Executive Council gathering. Another goal that will be discussed is how the Executive Council can become more pro-active in serving the regional councils while, at the same time, being careful to respect leadership autonomy through honoring the concept of subsidiarity. I have appointed a chair who will correlate the visitation reports, to improve the follow-up in the visitation process. A procedure manual is being compiled to help bring consistency to our NAFRA operation. The Formation Commission is envisioning a program that will result in the certification of Formation Directors. Three new, very capable members were added to the Executive Council at the election chapter in October of last year, the largest change in leadership in over a decade.

It is hoped that these efforts of your Executive Council will help to create a climate in which the Franciscan charism will be lived more fully by all members of our Secular Franciscan Order.

The next major event is the July, 2002 Quinquennial Congress, which will take place at Loyola University in New Orleans. The threefold challenge of the Congress is: Transformation, Apostleship, and Unity. A second All Commissions Conference is planned for the summer of 2004. For an answer to any questions you may have, please contact me at my e-mail address: sfowicks@aol.com

Lastly, I want you to realize that you have a capable, dedicated, and servant-oriented Executive Council. I would match this Council, skill-wise, against the corporate board of any major industry. Also, you have the added benefit that we are a spiritual bunch attempting, as best we can, to serve you in the spirit of Saint Francis. So, let us begin

Bill Wicks SFO, for Marie Amore SFO, Elizabeth Allen SFO, John Sanborn SFO, Deacon Oscar Perez SFO, Diane Halal SFO, Laura Haukaas SFO, Father Loren Connell OFM, David and Therese Ream SFO, and Carol Gentile SFO.

QUINQUENNIAL CONGRESS DATE CHANGE!!!

JULY 2 – 7, 2002

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

PLEASE BE SURE TO MAKE
NOTE OF THIS CHANGE.

***“Called to Build a More Fraternal
and Evangelical World”***

Wednesday, July 3

***“Who Are We as Franciscans –
The Challenge”***

***“Who Are We as Secular
Franciscans”***

Thursday, July 4

***“What Do we Do as Secular
Franciscans”***

Friday, July 5

***“Joined Together in Unity as
Franciscans”***


Saturday, July 6

“Celebrate Diversity in Mission”

- Workshops on Thursday Afternoon
- Concert Thursday Night
- Optional Tours of New Orleans and environs on Friday afternoon
- New Orleans-Type Celebration on Saturday Evening

Prayer for the Quinquennial Congress

July 2 - 7, 2002, Loyola University, New Orleans, Louisiana



We humbly call upon the Blessed Trinity to help us as we prepare in prayer and in action for our upcoming Quinquennial Congress.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit: be with us and guide us.

Loving God, you created us in your image. Help us to always be open to be transformed into that special person that you created us to be. You have called us to a special vocation as Franciscans - what a wonderful gift. Help us to understand the true meaning of that gift. Help us to become what you intended for us.

Saint Irenaeus reminds us that: The glory of God is the human person fully alive. Bring us to that fullness of life. Give flesh and spirit to any dry bones that we may still be holding on to. Bless our Congress so that each person who attends will experience the fullness of metanoia. Bring us to that penitential spirit that Lino Temperini, TOR writes about: "...an intimate conversion of the heart to God, as a vital attitude, as a continuous state of being." For it is out of our unique being that we are best able to serve You and Your people.

Saint Francis, Saint Clare, and all of the Franciscan Saints, we ask your intercession for the preparation and the process of the Congress. Mary, mother of Jesus, whom Francis embraced with indescribable love, protectress and advocate of the Franciscan family, be with us throughout the Congress and help us to say "yes" to any encounter that will invite us to be transformed.

Our Trinitarian God, help us to live the Franciscan charism that is a gift of our Holy Father Francis. Help us to live our Pauline Rule that is a gift of the Holy Spirit. The essence of our Rule of Life is the call to go from Gospel to Life, and life to the Gospel. Given our call to Gospel life, help us to live the theme of our Congress which is: "Called to build a more fraternal and evangelical world". We answer that call best from our being, from who we are as authentic followers of Saint Francis. Let us begin....

Each of the next four issues of TAU-USA will present a prayer for the success of our 16th SFO Quinquennial Congress. Please say these prayers as often as possible to petition God's transforming grace to be overwhelming at our Congress. You may choose to copy the prayer and carry it with you.

Will No One Condemn You?

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

During Lent this year, we heard the Gospel passage about the woman caught in adultery. Jesus is asked what should be done with her. This was one of those traps set up for Jesus, as the Judaic law called for the adulterous person to be stoned to death, and the Romans had just taken capital punishment away from the Jews to show that they were in total control of all aspects of life in Judea. This scene stays in our minds for two reasons: the first is that only the woman was there, even though it is generally considered that it takes two to commit adultery; the second is that, when Jesus tells the crowd, "Let the one who is without sin throw the first stone", He looks up to the woman from His drawing in the dirt and says, "Is there no one left to condemn you?", she replies, "No one, Sir", and Jesus responds, "Then neither will I. Go, and avoid this sin."

*How far these
are from the
message of Jesus,
who preached
love and
forgiveness...*

In the almost 2000 years that have passed, this lesson seems to have been lost on many of the followers of Jesus in today's world. We still want that "Old Law" of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. We want the guilty punished for their crimes with no mercy

shown, as an example for other would-be offenders. We can see the horror of the offense that was committed, the pain and suffering caused to the victim and their family, and we demand that "justice" must be done. So many times it seems that this means justice can be done only when blood flows, when the last rock has been thrown.

On January 9th, 2001, the State of Texas killed Jack Ward Clark, SFO. He was the 240th person executed in Texas since that state resumed capital punishment in 1982, and the first ordered by the new governor (the former governor had ordered 152 during his stay in office). It was also the 684th execution since the US re-instituted capital punishment in 1977. This number has earned our country the second place position on Amnesty International's list of violators of the international human rights standards (right after China, and ahead of Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq).

While in prison, Jack Clark converted to Catholicism, and, on November 17, 2000, made his profession as a Secular Franciscan in the Annunciation Fraternity in Houston, TX. His faith journey was nurtured by our brother and sister Seculars active in prison ministry. They spread the word of his scheduled execution last winter, with the result that, in addition to an uncountable number of prayers, there was an outpouring of letters, calls, and faxes to the governor of Texas to stay the execution. The National Peace and Justice Commission

wrote a letter, as did the international OFM Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation office in Rome, and many others. Unfortunately the execution went forward.

In a brief final statement while strapped to the death chamber gurney, Jack Clark expressed remorse and prayed. "I would like to say to the family that I am sorry, and I do ask their forgiveness", he said as five members of his victim's family stood a few feet away, watching through a window. He invited people to attend his funeral Mass, and then recited a short prayer, closing with the familiar Franciscan words "peace and goodness". He was pronounced dead at 6:27 pm, nine minutes after the lethal drugs started flowing. "If we confess our sins, He is just and true to forgive us of our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness," Clark said.

The victim's family was doubly grieved, having lost not only Melisa Ann Garcia at the hand of Jack Clark, but also her grandmother, Elizabeth Alvarado, to violent crime a year earlier. It is impossible not to feel sympathy for the family, to grieve with them in their hurt and pain. But did the execution of Clark bring healing, or did it satisfy only a perceived need for retribution? We pray for strength for families of victims, that they may be able to forgive. Bud Welch, who lost his 23 year old daughter, Julie, in the Oklahoma City bombing, has said about the execution of Timothy McVeigh, "I know the pain of losing a loved one because of a senseless act of violence.... We must chose to stop the cycle of violence. Killing Tim McVeigh only continues the violence."

Welch's words echo the US Catholic Bishops' 1999 statement that "the death penalty offers the tragic illusion that we can defend life by taking life". Their 1999 Good Friday message continues: "Respect for all human life and opposition to the violence in our society are at the root of our long-standing position against the death penalty.

We see the death penalty as perpetuating a cycle of violence and promoting a sense of vengeance in our culture. We cannot teach that killing is wrong by killing."

Retribution. Vengeance.

How far these are from the message of Jesus, who preached love and forgiveness, and from the message of Saint Francis that encourages us to strive for reconciliation. The Wisconsin Catholic bishops recognized the value of forgiveness and reconciliation in their letter titled, "Public Safety, the Common Good, and the Church: A Statement on Crime and Punishment in Wisconsin." The bishops noted,

During his public ministry, Jesus called on His followers to not just love their neighbors but also their enemies; to do good to those who harm you. Instead of unlimited revenge and retaliation, Jesus



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, Mountaintop, PA 18707-9415

Divine Mercy Region

The Region's annual meeting will be held August 3 - 5, 2001. The theme will be "Entrusting our Hearts to the Lord in Solitude".

Marie Criste, SFO announces that Divine Mercy Region will sponsor a day-long All Commissions Conference on September 22, 2001. National Apostolic Commissions Coordinator Carol Gentile, SFO will be the main speaker.

Father Solanus Casey Region

The Secular Experience of Living Franciscanism (SELF) will be held at Villa Maria Retreat Center in Stamford, CT, August 12 - 16.

The Region will sponsor two Apostolic Commission workshops. Dorothea MacNeil, SFO, Regional Family Commissioner, will present a workshop on the Family Commission on September 8; Claire Lynch, SFO, Regional Ecology Commissioner will present an Ecology Workshop on November 10. Both workshops will be held at Saint Pius X Church Hall in Middletown, CT.

Five Franciscan Martyrs Region

Regional Ecology Commissioner Lisa Stauffer, SFO, reports that she is surveying local fraternities in her region to get an idea what they are doing in the ecology apostolate, and what their needs and plans might be. She hopes to create a web page. As she receives input from the local fraternities, she will share it with the National Ecology Commission. What a great idea! Regional and local fraternities are urged to let the Commission know what you are doing, so that they can share with other fraternities throughout the country. E-mail Justin Carisio, SFO (carisio@yahoo.com), or write to 2508 Oakfield Lane, Wilmington, DE 19810, or call 302-478-6593.

Holy Trinity Region

On March 31, Marie Amore, SFO, National Vice Minister, presided at the Region's Chapter of Elections at Saint Vivian's Parish in Cincinnati, OH. Anita Bidleman, SFO was elected Regional Minister.

The regional retreat was held April 27 - 29 at Friarhurst in Cincinnati. The theme was "The Body and Blood of Christ". The Retreat Master was Hilarion Kistner, OFM.

A regional day of recollection is scheduled for August 4 at Good Shepherd Parish in Cincinnati, OH. Sister Margaret Carney, a member of the Sisters of Saint Francis of Whitehall, PA, will be the speaker.

The Region's newly elected Formation Director, Patti Normile, SFO, announces that *To Live As Francis Lived*, the book by Foley and Weigel, which she recently revised, is now available on audio cassette tape. This is especially helpful for those who are hearing impaired or who prefer to listen rather than read. If you would like additional information on this, contact Patti at pnormile@compuserve.com

Lady Poverty Region

Saints Peter and Paul Fraternity in Cumberland, MD offered a day of recollection for Lent on March 10. Father Mark Carter, OFM Cap was the speaker.

Lady Poverty Region will host the second annual Prayerful Retreat at the Saint Joseph Center in Greensburg, PA, September 28 - 30, 2001. The retreat master will be Dr. Edward Shirley, SFO. The theme will be "The Blessed Mother".

La Verna Region

The Fox Valley District gathered on May 19 at the Salvatorian Mission Warehouse in New Holstein, WI. Marie Amore, SFO, Father Steve Gross, OFM Conv, Richard Morton, SFO, and Anne Mulqueen, SFO of the National Spirit and Life Team were the presenters.

Mother Cabrini Region

The Region held a workshop on March 24 at Mayslake Village. Speakers presented ideas and projects for fraternities

A Candidates' Retreat was held on April 7 and May 5 at Mayslake Village.

The annual meeting of Ministers and Formation Directors was held May 19.

Our Lady of the Angels Region

"Convivenza", the Region's annual unity day, a fraternal gathering of Franciscan joy, was held on April 21 at Saint Francis Church in Hackensack, NJ. The Region's Portiuncula Award was presented to Father Robert M. Stewart, OFM. Carol Gentile, SFO, National Apostolic Commissions Coordinator, was the guest speaker.

Saint Clare Region

Saint Clare Region's annual retreat was held March 9 - 11. The Retreat Master was Father John Sullivan, OFM. Father Lester Bach, OFM Cap will be the Retreat Master for next year's retreat, April 12 - 14, 2002.

Saint Elizabeth of Hungary Region

The Region will sponsor a retreat June 15 - 17 at the Franciscan Center in Andover, MA. The theme will be "Francis, the Saint for the Millennium". The Retreat Director will be Father John Bavaro, OFM, who will invite participants to see Saint Francis as the faithful follower of Christ - a man totally Catholic and truly apostolic.

Saint Francis Region

Saint Francis Region held an All Commissions Conference at Marywood in Orange County, CA in April. The planning team included Regional Minister Rock DeSpain, SFO, Father William Brand, OFM, and Loris and Jim Morrissey, SFO.

During the weekend of May 25 – 27, the Region sponsored their annual retreat at Serra Malibu.

A Spanish Spiritual Day was held in Orange County on May 26.

Father William Brand, OFM, President of the Conference of Regional Spiritual Assistants will lead a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Rome, and Assisi in November.

Saint Joan of Arc Region

At the Regional Chapter of Elections this Winter, Barbara Smith, SFO was elected Regional Minister.

Saint Katharine Drexel Region

The Region's Chapter of Elections was held on March 10 at Saint Francis Retreat House, in Easton, PA. Terri Leone, SFO was re-elected Minister.

The Region will host an All Commission Conference on September 15, 2001 at Christ the King Parish in Haddonfield, NJ. Justin Carisio, SFO, newly appointed National Ecology Commission Chair, will give the keynote address. Kathy Taormina, SFO, from the National Youth/Young Adult Commission will make a presentation on behalf of the Youth Commission.

Troubadours of Peace Region

The annual Minster's Meeting will be held June 8 – 10, 2001.

During the weekend of August 10 - 11, 2001, Saint Francis of Assisi Fraternity will sponsor a Secular Franciscan Retreat at Gonzaga University in Spokane, WA. Father Benet Fonck, OFM will be the Retreat Director.



8th Annual Secular Franciscan Wildflower Garden Sale

Choose from two complete gardens!

The Woodland Garden requires shade; the Meadow Garden requires sun. Each garden consists of prime nursery stock. Plants are hardy and tough perennials.

To order, send your name, UPS delivery address (no P.O. Box numbers!), telephone number, and a check for \$34.95 per garden (shipping and handling included) to:

Sunlight Gardens
174 Golden Lane
Andersonville, TN 37705

Telephone: 865-494-8237; e-mail: sungardens@aol.com
Be sure to specify Woodland Garden or Meadow Garden.

* These gardens cannot be shipped west of the Rockies due to high shipping costs and western state plant quarantines. Thank you for understanding.

Help Wanted:

Translators Needed for TAU-USA

The Editors of TAU-USA are working to produce TAU-USA in multiple languages to post on the website for our non-native English-speaking brothers and sisters.

We hope to obtain translation software to assist in this task.

Brothers and sisters who are interested in helping us accomplish this service to our Order should:

- have a strong knowledge of English grammar, as well as the particular language to which they will translate;
- have e-mail capabilities;
- be able and willing to meet deadlines

We are seeking at least three people for each of the following languages (to make the work of translating less burdensome): Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, Italian.

If you are able to serve your Order in this way, please contact the Editors by e-mail at tausa@netzero.net

If there is a perceived need for translations into other languages, please, do contact us. We will do our best to accommodate this need.



Will No One Condemn You?

... continued from page eleven

called for unlimited love (Matthew 5:38-48) and said our forgiveness should be beyond calculation; it should be seventy times seven (Matthew 18:22).

And even while Jesus hung dying on the cross, He extended welcome and love to the criminal hanging next to him (Luke 23:43). This was "an act of extreme mercy, an extreme gift, which can give confidence even to those who feel totally lost. With this act of forgiveness, the Lord speaks to humanity in every age." As we Secular Franciscans strive to bring Gospel to life and life to the Gospel, we should listen closely to Jesus' message. We need to help our country rethink the issues involved in capital punishment and our system of criminal justice in terms of restoring right relationships. The victims and the offender are caught up in the web that cannot free them or restore them to the community. Only the love that Jesus meant can do that.

In an address given in Washington, DC in May 2000, Cardinal Roger Mahoney noted:

Our faith calls us to be "unconditionally pro-life".... We recommit to work with our community of faith to combat crime and violence, to turn our prisons from warehouses of human failure and seedbeds of violence, to places of rehabilitation and recovery.... Simple solutions rarely address difficult problems. What is needed is a moral revolution that results in genuine respect for human life, especially the unborn and the poor, the crime victims, and even the violent offender. In the end, our society will be measured by how we treat "the least among us".

Dignitas ... "Practice Makes Perfect"

Teresa S. Redder, SFO

Member, National Work Commission

23 Shelter Rock Road, Eastampton, NJ 08060-3216

609-267-1460; e-mail: tredder@nothinbut.net

In early Spring, I became aware of two problems at work related to serious data discrepancies. Situations such as these occur in our everyday lives, and they demand our response.

My program provides logistics support to Navy ships. During a time of peak demand for a particular product, we were critically short of replenishments. Our repair people were trying to get supply ahead of demand, expediting material through repair to satisfy the requisitions. While everyone's adrenalin was running high, we found out that our inventory database reflected twenty more assets than were actually on the shelf. Our customer had access to this database and trusted us to keep accurate records. In the end, not only were we scrambling, but we also had to approach the customer about the data error and correct the database.

In the second situation, we shipped a requisition to the wrong destination (opposite ocean!). The supply system gave us the correct shipping destination, but we sent it to a different supply center. The customer still needed the part, had paid for the part, and did not get the material.

As program manager, I felt responsible to investigate the causes of these problems. I called in a few of our key personnel to discuss what we knew, and what broke down in our processes. One of our support specialists glibly said to me, "Well, it's human to make errors, and these were simple errors." None of the representatives had yet indicated to me that they were dissatisfied with what had occurred. I assigned people to research the root causes of the problems, and to make recommendations to me about how to fix the process.

The next day, I received an e-mail from the person who had made the comment above, with a little rhyme he made up about erring. The little ditty was tongue-in-cheek, but it made me pause and think, "He just doesn't get it." However, I stopped a moment and thought that perhaps I wasn't getting it either. Since the material that we repair and build can be mission-critical and the users can be in life-or-death situations, I began to wonder just how acceptable program sloppiness or errors could be. As my mind was wandering through examples, I began to think of:

- The dentist removing a healthy molar instead of the abscessed tooth in someone's mouth.
- A diabetic having the wrong limb amputated when infection takes its toll, causing a double amputation.
- A family losing their home (even loved ones and pets) to fire because an electrician mis-wired the home improvements in the basement.
- A store selling food products with expired shelf life or known defects, causing illness or death.
- A family experiencing a serious car accident after car maintenance done with "simple errors."

When someone is learning a new sport, or how to play a musical instrument, the coach or teacher will frequently remind the student that "Practice makes perfect". Athletes who go on to the Olympics have invested thousands of hours of practice into their specialty.

On the other hand, we have also heard the quote, "To err is human, to forgive is Divine". As I reflected on that quote, I realized that many workers are afraid to admit their mistakes because of the consequences. Whether people approach their work spiritually or not, there is an implicit need for integrity, trust, and honor. It is vital that compassion be present in the workplace. Compassion can peacefully coexist with discipline and standards. Depersonalized corporations can trivialize that reverence for the work and the people doing the work.

When my team members returned with their analyses of the two errors, I tried to stay focused on our processes. I reminded them that people make the processes work and that people are the recipients of our actions. What would we expect if we were the recipients of our own actions? High quality, timeliness, accuracy, fair price?

- Are we fully present to what we are doing while we are doing it? Do we keep in mind for whom we are doing this?
- As we "co-create" in our work, do we link our own work efforts to those of others and question the goodness of the whole? Or are we content to be isolated?
- How is humility a part of our work ethic?

Saint Francis wrote this to the whole Order, "Give thanks to Yahweh for He is good and extol Him in your works, because He has sent you into the whole world for this, namely, to give testimony to His voice in word and work and to make known to all that there is no other Almighty besides Him."



Some Good Advice

Pat Brandwein-Ball, SFO

Minister, Saint Elizabeth of Hungary Region

Once again we have celebrated the Easter Season. This opportunity to take a closer look at our relationship with the Holy Trinity cannot be understated. As Secular Franciscans we must review our lives in terms of our daily willingness to be converted. The penitential season of Lent led us through the desert with heightened awareness of our busy-ness, our selfishness, our hard-headedness. These are the roots of many problems in society and in our fraternities. Now, in the joy of the Risen Christ, let us take time to examine, with the eyes of renewed faith, just "how we are doing". Review our Rule and the articles of the General Constitutions which pertain to each article. Come before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and spend one hour in prayer – spend another hour listening to Him!

I, A Leper

Vic Landry, SFO

Saint Joseph Fraternity, Baton Rouge, LA

I hate. These two words are the sum total of my existence. I hate what I am. I hate the disease that consumes my body from the extremities in. I hate the rags I arrange to hide the most hideous sores and corruption covering so much of my body. I hate the smell that draws the flies to lay their eggs in my wounds. I hate the bell I ring to let decent people know that a wretch like me is drawing near. I hate the hunger that knots my belly and saps what little strength I have. I hate the daylight that allows others to see what I am and causes the sweat to pour, stinging and burning, into my raw flesh. I hate the night when I huddle with other creatures like myself in the damp cave we inhabit, a hovel so disgusting no one unlike us can stand to approach from downwind. I hate my mother for giving life to a child destined for misery and reproach. I hate whatever unknown sin caused a boy of ten years to be condemned to year after year of fear and loathing. I hate this road I travel daily to beg for alms at the gate of Assisi. I hate the dust stirred by the horses of the lords and ladies that gallop past, their royal eyes averted and their perfumed scarves held to their noses. I hate them in their fine clothes and their fine houses with servants to tend to their every want. I hate the dogs that eat their scraps, a meal better than I will ever have. Most of all, I hate God for turning His face from me like everyone else.

In the distance I see a rider on horseback and I hear the pounding hooves – another wealthy young merchant's son on his way to squander his time on drink and carousing. I limp to the side of the road and turn my head, ringing the bell. I turn my head as much to avoid the look on his face as to avoid the dust from his mount. I hear the horse slow and stop. I feel the rider's eyes staring at me. I hold out my hand and cry for alms, hating myself for my poverty and him for his wealth. He approaches. A faint hope stirs in my breast; perhaps he will provide food or alms enough to shorten my journey. Or will he shorten my life with his sword? Could his loathing for my miserable form cause him to provide a merciful end to my life?

"Brother, look at me."

I turn my head in response, looking through the rags that cover the ruin of my face. I see a small, slight young man with protruding ears and glittering eyes. The eyes – they gaze at me in a way I have not seen in these many years. How can this be? How can he stand to look at me with such love and compassion? They burn into my soul and enkindle a fire, long buried and smothered. What is this? He embraces me, wrapping his thin arms around my wretchedness, lifting me from the ground in his enthusiasm.

"God loves you and so do I. Peace and all good, my brother."

With those words, he kisses me, slips some coins into my hand, leaps onto his horse and gallops away singing and laughing.

I stagger and crumple to the ground weeping and sobbing, the warmth of God's love coursing through my soul, displacing the knotted bonds of hate. Oh, Divine happiness! Oh, Divine love! My soul is redeemed and made whole. My rags are like the finest silk and my wounds feel as though they are treated with a divine balm. I sing songs of praise that I have not sung since my boyhood. I turn toward Assisi with renewed strength of body and soul and with enough alms to sustain my brother lepers and myself for months. Praise God and that young man!



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 August 1, 2001 to:

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

Local Fraternity Franciscan Peace Award

Patricia Mulligan, SFO
Minister, Holy Spirit Fraternity,
Lady Poverty Region

During Catholic Schools Week, the eighth-grade classes of the four Mercer County, PA parish schools gathered at Saint Michael Church in Greenville for Mass, followed by a breakfast. Teachers, priests, Secular Franciscans, and some parents attended. After the breakfast, the second annual "Saint Francis of Assisi Peacemaker Award" was presented to eighth-grade students Terrance Hall of Monsignor Geno J. Monti School (Farrell); Alexis George of Notre Dame School (Hermitage); Mark Anthony DiMario II of Saint Joseph School (Sharon); and Sarah Racz of Saint Michael School (Greenville). The award consisted of a \$200.00 United States Savings Bond, a Peacemaker certificate, and a short biography of Saint Francis. The presentation was made by Patricia Mulligan, Minister of Holy Spirit Fraternity and Lady Poverty Regional Peace and Justice Commissioner.

Recipients were selected by teachers, with suggestions from peers. The students were recognized for the positive impact they have on their immediate environment. They actively seek peaceful solutions to resolve the ordinary day-to-day tensions that arise in school, and encourage peaceful relationships among students. They set a good example for others.

The Peacemaker Award was established by Holy Spirit Fraternity, Sharon, PA, for a minimum of ten years, to provide the area Catholic schools with a positive educational tool to be used in addressing conflict resolution, peacemaking and the dignity of individuals, and to honor a peacemaker in each of the eighth grades.



Pictured above with Patricia Mulligan, SFO, Minister of Holy Spirit Fraternity are the recipients of the "Saint Francis Peacemaker Award". Left to right, Terrence Hall, Mark Anthony DiMario II, Alexis George, and Sarah Racz.



*Do not pray for easy lives -
pray to be stronger!*

Father Solanus Casey

Introducing...

Justin Carisio, SFO, the newly appointed Chair of the National Ecology Commission. Justin returns to a position in which he has previously served in 1990-1992. Justin was professed in 1987 in San Damiano Fraternity of Wilmington, Delaware, where he has served as Minister, Vice-Minister and Formation Director. He chaired the Regionalization Committee for Saint Katharine Drexel Region, and was co-chair committee that planned the 15th Quinquennial Congress in Newark, DE in 1997. He was Formation Director for Saint Katharine Drexel Region from 1995-1998 and Vice-Minister from 1998-2001. He has served on the editorial board and the environmental task force of the Sisters of Saint Francis of Philadelphia in Aston, PA. He is a writer and poet and, professionally, is a speechwriter at DuPont, where he has worked on environmental issues. He has also been involved in land preservation work, and led a team that partnered with the New Jersey Audubon Society to create the Twin Islands Wildlife Sanctuary in the Delaware River estuary. He is a past member of the administrative board of the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. His wife of 26 years is Teresa Carisio, SFO, who is active in the prison ministry of the Franciscan Center of Wilmington. They have two sons.



A Light That Is Clare

George Ferguson, SFO

This reflection is a spontaneous response to having met Saint Clare of Assisi for the first time as an adult learner enrolled in FRAN 204, Franciscan Spirituality, one of the courses offered by the Institute for Contemporary Franciscan Life at Saint Francis University, Loretto, PA. Dr. Thérèse Ream, SFO served as George's reader / instructor. This poem is reprinted with George's kind permission. Our brother, George, is from Scotland.

A light, in the form of a woman,
came from the mists of history
and revealed her reality to me.

This illumination is new, yet old,
as it existed before my understanding.
It shines now, as it shone centuries ago.

Her radiance is to me
like a dawn that gives immediate warmth
to the new buds of charity.

Her brightness ignites my love
for poverty and the poor
as I follow her shining example.

She was cloistered in my unknowing,
but her light shone through the haze -
and now, I know her.



Family Matters

"Here's something to think about"

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

We came across this article some time ago. We were so moved by it that we shared it with our family, relatives, friends, co-workers and neighbors. They were deeply moved too. Some of you have probably come across this, but we just wanted as many hearts and souls as possible to ponder what this man has said. It is about praying. It is about what we have been advocating since we became Chairs of the Family Commission. Prayers. Prayers. Prayers.

On Thursday, May 27, 1999, Darrell Scott, father of Rachel Scott, a victim of the Columbine High School shootings in Colorado, was invited to address a subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee.

What he said to our national leaders during this special session was painfully truthful. They were not prepared for what he had to say, nor was it well received. It needs to be heard by every parent, every teacher, every politician, every sociologist, every psychologist, and every so called expert! These courageous words, spoken by Darrell Scott, are powerful, penetrating, and deeply personal. There is no doubt that God sent this man as a voice crying in the wilderness.

The following is a portion of the transcript:

Since the dawn of creation there has been good and evil in the hearts of men and women. We all contain the seeds of kindness and the seeds of violence. The death of my wonderful daughter, Rachel Joy Scott, and the death of that heroic teacher, and the other eleven children who died must not be in vain. Their blood cries out for answers. The first recorded act of violence was when Cain slew his brother Abel out in the field. The villain was not the club he used. Neither was it the NCA, the National Club Association. The killer was Cain, and the reason for the murder could only be found in Cain's heart.

In the days that followed the Columbine tragedy, I was amazed at how quickly fingers began to be pointed at groups such as the NRA. I am not a member of the NRA. I am not a hunter. I do not even own a gun. I am not here to represent or defend the NRA – because I don't believe that they are responsible for my daughter's death. Therefore I do not believe they have anything to be defended. If I believed they had anything to do with Rachel's murder, I would be their strongest opponent.

I am here today to declare that the Columbine tragedy was not just a tragedy, it was a spiritual event that should be forcing us to look at where the real blame lies! Much of the blame lies here in this room. Much of the blame lies behind the

pointing of the accusers themselves. I wrote a poem just four nights ago that expresses my feelings best. This was written way before I knew I would be speaking here today.

*Your laws ignore our deepest need,
Now gunshots fill our classrooms,
Your words are empty air.
You've outlawed simple prayer.
And precious children die.
You seek for answers everywhere,
And ask the question "Why?"
You regulate restrictive laws,
Through legislative creed.
And yet you fail to understand,
That God is what we need!*

Amen!



John Murphy, SFO Goes Home

Bob Garon, SFO

To those who knew John Murphy, SFO, there is no doubt where he is today. He is home. The Irish-American Catholic from Brooklyn left his mark in the world as a husband, a father, and a Secular Franciscan. His lasting image is his willingness to serve, a sense of humor, and a kind and gentle way. In his Franciscan life, the tall, slender pioneer helped found a fraternity, became a Spiritual Assistant, and supported the Secular Franciscan movement on the national, regional and local levels.

John Murphy, SFO died March 22, 2001 at the age of 89 in Phoenix, AZ. The Mass of the Resurrection at Saint Thomas Catholic Church on March 26th was attended by more than 200 of his family and friends. The celebrants included Father Nils Frances Thompson, OFM, Father Rusty Shaughnessey, OFM, and Father Evan Howard, OFM.

John was a professed Secular Franciscan for 58 years. He served as Prefect of his fraternity during the 1950's. He and his wife Madeline moved to Phoenix with their family in 1960. John has always been in leadership, serving as Councilor and Treasurer for Santa Barbara SFO Province. He was Treasurer on the National Fraternity Council, and was instrumental in the forming of Saint Thomas More Region, serving as pro-tem Minister. Near the end, John served as a Spiritual Assistant for Our Lady of the Rosary fraternity.

After his first wife, Madeline, died, John married Madonna, a widow, and a Secular Franciscan. It was Madonna who, during her last days, pointed him to Madonna. John and Madonna had fifteen years together. While there was no wake to send him off, John, I am sure, was welcomed home by many Franciscan brothers and sisters.



Spiritual Assistants

Loren T. Connell, OFM

President, Conference of National Spiritual Assistants

Article 26 of the *Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order* states that each fraternity shall ask the friars for a "suitable and well-trained religious" to serve as its Spiritual Assistant. Spiritual Assistants are fairly new in the history of the Secular Franciscan Order. Prior to 1978 they did not exist. Instead, each fraternity had a Spiritual Director. There is a big difference between assisting and directing. A director is a superior; an assistant is a peer. While the Assistant may have special training, knowledge, or skill, which he/she shares for the well-being of the fraternity, it is not the Assistant's primary responsibility to dispense wisdom, knowledge, or expertise. The Spiritual Assistant is present as a sign of the wider dimensions of the Franciscan family and its charism. The Assistant journeys as a brother or sister with the other members of the fraternity.

The *Rule* assumes that the Spiritual Assistant will be a Franciscan friar of the First Order or of the Third Order Regular. According to the law of the Church, every local fraternity is bonded to a specific province of friars. That province then has the obligation to provide a Spiritual Assistant to the fraternity. The Assistant is, as the *Rule* states, "a concrete sign of communion" within the Franciscan family. Ideally, the Assistant is a friar of the

province to which the fraternity is bonded. In reality, the Assistant may be a religious of another province, of the Second Order, or of one of the many congregations of the Third Order. The Assistant may be a lay or ordained member of the SFO itself. In rare instances he/she may even be cleric or religious who is not a member of

*We are among
you as your
brothers, and
that is how we
ask you to
receive us.*

the Franciscan family. In any case, the Spiritual Assistant represents the friars and must be appointed by them.

It may be appropriate here to comment on the role of the friars in the Franciscan family. Friars are male religious who have vowed to observe the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. We follow the Rule of the Friars Minor or the Rule and Constitutions of the Third Order Regular. Our initials are OFM, OFM Cap, OFM Conv, or TOR. The Holy See has entrusted the Secular Franciscan Order to our pastoral care. Now one of the more obvious marks of religious life is celibate chastity. Because celibacy is likewise required of priests and bishops in the Latin Rite, and because most male religious in the United States are also ordained priests, American friars are frequently seen as just one more variety of priests. For Franciscans, nothing could be farther from the truth! The word "friar" is a medieval English word meaning "brother." Franciscan friars are first of all brothers, some of whom may be ordained and some of whom may not be. We are among you as your brothers, and that is how we ask you to receive us.

In looking for a Spiritual Assistant, then, do not look first of all for a wise guru who can educate and edify the fraternity, or for a priest or deacon who can celebrate Benediction. Rather, look for a sign of unity within the Franciscan family. When you have found someone – friar, other Franciscan religious, Secular Franciscan, or possibly even a non-Franciscan priest, deacon, or religious – who personifies that unity, ask the friars to whom your fraternity is bonded to appoint that person as your Spiritual Assistant. You will have proposed, in the words of the *Rule*, a "suitable" candidate. The friars will check to see whether or not that candidate is "well-trained" and open to further formation when appropriate. A Spiritual Assistant, for instance, must accept the *Rule* of 1978, respect the secular charism of the Order, and understand its basic spirituality and organization. If the person whom the fraternity has proposed is indeed qualified, the friars will be happy to appoint him/her as the Spiritual Assistant to the local fraternity. Then both friars and seculars can celebrate the unity of our Franciscan family!



Secular Franciscan Earns Award from Archdiocese

Angela Ames, SFO, a member of Saint Joseph Fraternity, Monroe, MI, was one of twenty community leaders honored by the Archdiocese of Detroit's Black Catholic Ministries with a "Keep the Dream Alive" award in January.

The inaugural award, named in honor of the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., was presented during a ceremony at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit. It marked the first event in a yearlong celebration of the 300th anniversary of the Archdiocese.

Mrs. Ames, 83, was nominated from the Monroe Vicariate for her continued involvement in lay ministry for more than forty years. She was a leading force in the Vicariate's celebration of the Jubilee Year 2000, which included open houses and the Eucharistic Congress in November. She serves as chairman, and one of the founders, of the Monroe Vicariate Pastoral Council. Her lay ministry includes being a sacristan, lector, and catechist. She is also co-chairman of her parish's Catholic Services Appeal annual campaign; secretary of the worship commission; and representative on the Saint Joseph Parish Council; publicity chairman for the annual parish homecoming festival; member of Christian Women; and the parish's representative on the Council of Catholic Women. She is also an English as a Second Language teacher in the Hispanic ministry in her parish.

Each award recipient received a plaque from Bishop Keven Britt, an auxiliary bishop for the archdiocese, who was the celebrant and homilist for a Mass celebrating the awards in the seminary chapel.

In his remarks, Bishop Britt said that the recipients were nominated for their "outstanding service in furthering the work and mission of Dr. King in their community".

Father Matthew Gaskin Honored



Kevin Corbett, SFO, Father Matt Gaskin, OFM, and Ron Pihokker, SFO

On March 18th, the Secular Franciscans of Our Lady of the Angels Region gathered for a special liturgy at Saint Francis of Assisi Church in Manhattan, New York City, to bestow its third Portiuncula Award on Father Matthew Gaskin, OFM, Provincial Spiritual Assistant of Holy Name Province and former National Spiritual Assistant. The award acknowledges Father Matt's distinguished career in Spiritual Assistance to the SFO at the local, Regional/Provincial, and National levels. In his long association with the Secular Franciscans, beginning in his home town of Buffalo, NY as a young friar assisting "high school fraternities" to serving as President of the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants, Father Matt has never failed to serve with great devotion and tremendous insight.

The Mass was celebrated by Father Richard Trezza, OFM, Regional Spiritual Assistant of Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity and National Formation Commission member.

Kevin Corbett, SFO, Regional Minister, introduced Ron Pihokker, SFO, previous recipient of the award, who made the presentation to Father Matthew.

In accepting the award, Father Matt quoted a passage from Saint Paul's Letter to the Ephesians, which he said he prays each day for the Secular Franciscans: "...I pray that you may have your roots and foundations in love; you, together with all God's people, may have power to understand how broad and long and high and deep is Christ's love..." (*Ephesians 3:14-21*)

Father Matthew becomes the third recipient of the Portiuncula Award. The first was Franciscans International, the Franciscan NGO at the United Nations; the second recipient was Ron Pihokker, SFO, for his work in catechetical leadership in the Diocese of Paterson and the Archdiocese of Newark and in Secular Franciscan formation and leadership.

Father Matthew continues his service as Provincial Spiritual Assistant to the Secular Franciscans.



National Work Commission Seeks Members

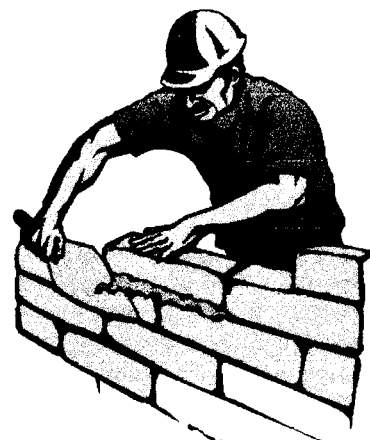
We are seeking qualified, multi-cultural, enthusiastic, joyful Secular Franciscans, interested in serving the National Fraternity. The National Work Commission plans to add several new members in order to respond more effectively to the needs of the National Fraternity. As a member of the Commission you will be expected to:

- be a prayerful, active Secular Franciscan, able to go from "Gospel to life and life to Gospel";
- understand Article 16 of our *Rule*, that all need to "esteem work as a gift" and be committed to encouraging the spread of this philosophy to all Secular Franciscans and into the world;
- be open to traveling and presenting workshops on work-related topics to fraternities and regions in a geographic area;
- work collaboratively with the other members of the Work Commission;
- provide suggestions and feedback on diverse topics concerning work;
- support work-related initiatives as they develop;
- accept responsibility for particular projects that may arise from collaborative decision making;
- assist members of non-native English speaking fraternities, and regions containing such, to achieve an integrated understanding of the Franciscan perspective of work;
- be in regular contact with Regional Work Commission Chairs in a designated geographic section of the country to solicit their input, needs, and concerns; and
- be willing and able to travel at least once a year, at Commission expense, to different parts of the United States for a meeting of the Work Commission.

The appointment to serve on the Work Commission will be for a period of one year with the possibility of annual reappointment. If the prospect of being a servant leader on the National Work Commission excites you, and if you believe that you have the qualities and abilities to fulfill this role, please send your SFO-related resumé, a copy of your Certificate of Profession, and one letter of reference (from a person serving on your local or Regional SFO Council) to:

Teresa S. Redder,
SFO
23 Shelter Rock Road
Eastampton, NJ
08060-3216

Application deadline is
June 30, 2001.



World Youth Day 2002

Franciscan Youth Delegates Contest

Kathy Taormina, SFO

Member, National Youth/Young Adult Commission
920 Whitney Drive, Apple Valley, MN 55124
952-997-2243; e-mail: ktsfo@frontiernet.net

"Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity." Saint Timothy wrote these words to encourage the young people to speak the truth of Christ in a world where they were not readily listened to as people. These words can also be used for the youth of today. We live in a world where the youth's faults, mistakes, and crimes are always front page news; while their good deeds, hard work, and blessed



accomplishments are hidden among the want ads – if publicised at all!

Every two years, though, the Catholic Church turns the spotlight on the youth and young adults of our church and our world. Pope John Paul II began world Youth Day in 1985

as a special time and place where Catholic youths could share their faith, stories, and love of Christ. During this intense five-day period, the world's youths come together to learn, to share, to reconcile, and, most importantly, receive and then become Eucharist for one another, and thus for the world.

As part of our greater Church, the Secular Franciscan Youth, at the international level, has organized the Franciscan World Youth Days. We meet as an Order dedicated to the Franciscan youth of the world. We met in Paris in 1997 and in Rome in 2000. The Secular Franciscan Order of the United States has been represented at both gatherings.

Once again, in August of 2002, in Toronto, Canada, the world's youths will be called forth to gather and make their Catholic presence known to the rest of the world. The National Fraternity of the SFO of Canada has accepted the challenge of hosting the Franciscan World Youth Days during this celebration of youth.

The Youth/Young Adult Commission will be attending the Franciscan Days in Canada to represent the United States and our emerging Franciscan charism among the youth of our country. As a means to that end, we would like to invite the participation of our country's Franciscan youth. Two young adults from the United States will be chosen to attend the Franciscan World Youth Days as our



delegates and participate in the World Youth Day events. The exact dates are to be announced, but it generally takes place in the third week of August.

Every applicant must meet the following criteria:

- be 18 – 23 years of age;
- be involved in active formation or pledged into a Franciscan Youth group or Secular Franciscan fraternity;
- submit a 500 (or less) word essay on the theme "How Does the Life of Saint Francis Speak to the Lives of Today's Youth?";
- submit a written recommendation and proof of formation from their Franciscan Youth leader and/or local Fraternity Minister;
- submit a personal resumé, including any youth activities;
- acquire the funds necessary for transportation to Minneapolis, MN, our departure city;
- have funds for two days meals and souvenirs.

The Youth/Young Adult Commission will provide the following:

- round-trip airfare from Minneapolis, MN to Toronto, Canada;
- World Youth Day registration and meal package;
- lodging in Toronto, Canada;
- one night lodging in Minneapolis, MN.

All submissions must be mailed to Mary and Anthony Mazotti, SFO at P.O. Box 2571, Arnold, CA 95223-2571. Deadline is August 31, 2001. Final judging of the two winners will be made by the National Executive Council and will be announced at our National Fraternity meeting in San Antonio in October.

Get the word out – get your youths moving! Let us go to Canada and become a part of the greatest youth celebration the world has ever seen!



*Two thousand years have gone by,
but sinners in need of mercy - and
who is not? - still experience the
consolation of that 'today' of
salvation which on the Cross opened
the gates of the Kingdom of God to
the repentant thief: "Truly, I say to
you, today you will be with me in
Paradise" (Luke 23:43)*

Pope John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*

Ongoing Formation Articles in TAU-USA are "User Friendly"

Teresa V. Baker, SFO
Member, National Formation Commission

The workings of the Commissions, and how to implement them, can be a monumental task to many a local fraternity council. Where to begin? What to present? How to make these workings take root in the everyday happenings of the fraternity members they serve? We are given an approach to answering these and other questions with each issue of TAU-USA. Each issue presents us with made-to-order, user friendly, ongoing formation materials which focus specifically on the workings of the Apostolic Commissions, the Youth/Young Adult Commission, and the Formation Commission. They lend themselves easily to helping us meet the challenge of staying abreast of our Franciscan happenings in the world; and they aid us in heeding Father Matthew Gaskin's admonition to "be about our Apostolic Commission works".

Topics are chosen for each issue of TAU-USA and the chairs of the National Commissions prepare a study guide that is user friendly and focused on the topic as seen through the lens of Ecology, or Family, or Formation, or Peace and Justice, or Youth and Young Adult, or Work. The materials are ours for the taking. All that is left for the local fraternity council to do is to choose.

But then what do we do? How do we implement these pages for an ongoing formation sharing?

- Begin by deciding which apostolic, or youth-related, or formation-related work we as a fraternity will concentrate on this month.
- Make enough copies of the appropriate page of TAU-USA and distribute them to the members either at a previous gathering or through the mail. (Of course, it would be ideal if each and every member of our fraternity received his or her own personal subscription to TAU-USA!).
- Ask members to read over the selection a few times and prepare their own responses to the questions provided.
- If the fraternity is large, it might be wise to arrange the members into smaller groups – or the council may want to look at more than one apostolate at a time, dividing the fraternity into groups according to the individual likes of each member. This is possible because all the articles share a common theme. Appoint a moderator for each group.
- As the fraternity gathers, ask the members to share which aspect of the article grabbed their attention. This is a good ice-breaker and it allows the members to share that point which interests them. For one, it may be a point of history, for another, an aspect from the life of Francis, for yet another, a resonance with their

own life. This allows everyone a time to share. It also allows the members to get to know one another. It presents a review of the article without a word-by-word reading.

- As this sharing concludes, the moderator can facilitate a discussion of the answers to the questions posed at the end of each article in TAU-USA, answers that the members have prepared before they've come to the gathering, or have developed as a result of the sharing that has occurred.

Voila! Ongoing user friendly formation sessions at our fingertips, and they come to us each quarter in TAU-USA. Use them and anticipate a growth of apostolic zeal and endeavor within our fraternities!



Father Camillus MacRory OFM Cap Celebrates Golden Jubilee

Mary Carson, SFO

On May 24, Father Camillus MacRory, OFM Cap, recently retired member of the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants, celebrated his Golden Jubilee of Ordination. Father Camillus was ordained in 1951 at the Capuchin Friary Ard Mhiure in northern Donegal, Ireland.

Father Camillus is respected throughout the country for his work with the Secular Franciscans. He has served the Order in various capacities; and is currently Spiritual Assistant to Our Lady of Angels Fraternity in Burlingame, CA. Bringing a wealth of wisdom and expertise to the Seculars, he has led retreats and seminars on Ecology, our *Rule*, and other aspects of Franciscan Spirituality.

His wit and joy have delighted us at Franciscan gatherings for many years. Camillus has often expressed his happiness in being associated with the Secular Franciscans and getting to know us. Camillus came to know the Seculars early in his life because his parents were professed in the Order; Camillus himself became a member of the Secular Franciscans before joining the Capuchin friars.

A physicist by training, Father Camillus is a man of learning; and yet he is simple and deep. He is devoted to the daily celebration of the Eucharist and Divine Office. It is obvious that Camillus loves being a Capuchin priest and brother, and that he loves Saint Francis and Saint Clare.

And now this wonderful Friar celebrates fifty years of the priesthood. A Jubilee Mass was celebrated at Our Lady of Angels Church in Burlingame on May 26, 2001, followed by a reception honoring Father Camillus.

Secular Franciscans who wish to offer their best wishes to Father Camillus may send their greetings to

Father Camillus MacRory, OFM Cap
1345 Cortez Avenue
Burlingame, CA 94010

Franciscan Family Council

Marie Amore, SFO

How do we think about the rest of the Franciscan Family? We hear about the Conventuals, the OFM's, the Third Order Regular Friars and Sisters, the Capuchins, Poor Clares. We are related! We share the same spiritual father. Shouldn't we be more of a family?

In recent years, representatives of NAFRA have been present at the Franciscan Federation assembly of Third Order Friars and Sisters. In turn, the Executive Director of the Federation, Sister Eleanor Granger, OSF, has been present at the NAFRA annual gathering. In 1998, at the August 17-20 Franciscan Federation Conference and Franciscan Family assembly in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Sister Eleanor Granger, OSF and the Executive Secretary of the Friars Conference, Father Mark Curesky, OFM Conv were charged with the responsibility of exploring interest and formulating a proposal for a group which would represent the various branches of the Franciscan Family.

In September, 1999, representatives from each of the branches of the Franciscan Family met to discern whether an entity could be set up to foster: the inter-relatedness of the sisters and brothers of the Franciscan Family; communication among the sisters and brothers of the Franciscan Family through the existing structures; and the gift that we, as family, bring to the Church and to our culture.

The group has chosen the name "Franciscan Family Council". The Council has no authority of governance over its member conferences / federations, or national fraternity.

I have been privileged to be a part of this Council as it was discerning its direction. Sister Eleanor Granger and I will be given the opportunity, at the NAFRA annual gathering, to speak to the Regional Ministers about the Franciscan Family Council, and how it can be of service to NAFRA and the other relatives of our family. We look forward to this time.



**WHEN TEMPTED,
INVOKE YOUR ANGEL.
IGNORE THE DEVIL,
AND
DO NOT BE AFRAID OF HIM:
HE TREMBLES AND FLEES
AT YOUR
GUARDIAN ANGEL'S SIGHT.**

Saint John Bosco

His Gift of Peace

Mary Ann Julian, SFO

Minister, Father Solanus Casey Region

One word kept surfacing as I prepared to write this message – Peace! A good word for the Easter season.

"Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give My peace." We know Christ's words. At Mass we say, "Peace be with you" several



times, including at the greeting of peace. We are Franciscans; we say, "Pax et Bonum" all the time. We use the word "peace" frequently in various contexts until it seems almost a routine sound, which we longer hear in our soul, which we no longer speak from our hearts. What does it mean? Does it mean the same to everyone? Does its meaning change according to the depth of our understanding or our need?

This Lent has been very intense, trying, and tiring. It has taught me hard lessons I needed to learn (and still need to learn). Has it been so for you? Have you learned new things about yourself? It has not been a peaceful time for me, mostly through my own fault. How many times have I invited, welcomed my Jesus into my heart and then ignored Him or pushed Him out by replacing Him with some anxiety or some personal weakness or fear? When troubles come and come again, what is inside upon which to rely? Nothing. Where is Jesus? He's back at His old station, knocking at the door. His Peace has been "outside" with Him. I had been searching for it in everyday phrases, in psalms and other scriptures, in the eyes and attitudes of good people, in deep thoughts on the recent deaths of a cousin and several other close friends, in music, and in sunny scenes, but to no avail. As uncomfortable as it is, God is merciful and wise to allow us to stew in our nothingness for a bit.

A good friar friend and a recently rediscovered book by Father Benedict Groeschel (on our home bookshelf) have encouraged me to think and listen below the surface. There I find that Dorothy from Oz had the same insight – what we seek, what we have received, what we love *is inside*. Jesus said it; He gave it. Now we *must live it* if we are to truly possess it. Jesus' gift of Peace, like His gift of Faith, is much like a baby's leg muscles: They are in there, but are only fully realized with practice, practice, practice. So continue on in faith, hope, and love. May troubles cause you to hold on tighter to the Truth which you have received; and may false peace and promises not cause you to loosen your grip on Christ. Persevere in Peace.

May the Peace of Jesus Christ be with you, fill your being, and transform you in His Love!

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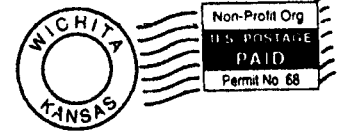
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