



TAU-USA

~ Newsletter of the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States ~
Spring 2006 ~ Issue Fifty

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Photo by Fay Mc Gartland

We
Gave
Up
Some
Color
For
Lent!

Praise the Lord!
Praise Him for His mighty works!
Praise Him for His unequalled greatness!
Let everything alive
Give praises to the Lord!

Psalm 150

TAU-USA

Over 15,000 copies in Circulation

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Dear God,
I am American
What are you?

Robert (age 7)

And Jesus answered,
Come and See.



TAU-USA is a vehicle of communication within the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States. It allows the National Fraternity to disseminate information to the regional and local fraternities and allows Seculars to communicate with one another throughout the country, thus fostering a sense of community nation wide. The deadline for submitting articles to the Editor, for the next issue of TAU-USA, is April 15, 2006. Permission to copy all material printed in TAU-USA is granted, except where the copyright is specifically reserved to the author or artist. In cases where the copyright is not reserved, please credit TAU-USA and the author. Care must be taken not to distort the author's intent by adapting or editorializing the article. All correspondence sent to the editor becomes the property of the editor, and may be published in TAU-USA. Please state in all correspondence whether you wish to have your name withheld. Submissions to the newsletter are welcome. To increase the likelihood of your submission being printed, the following guidelines are offered: Please ensure that articles do not exceed 200-350 words. Shorter articles have more chance of being published. Please understand that all articles may be edited for length and clarity. Submissions received after the deadline for a particular issue will be considered for the following issue. Please send all submissions for possible publication in WORD format, as an e-mail attachment. All professed members of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States receive the TAU-USA without charge. It is the responsibility of the Regional Ministers to make sure that the addresses of professed members, who wish to receive the TAU, are in the Data Base.

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Minister's Insights

By Carol Gentile, SFO
National Minister

"La Novitas Franciscana" Part I



Fr. Michael Higgins, TOR, CGSA, Dcn. Juan Lezcano, SFO, Encarnacion del Pozo, OFS, Minister General, Carol Gentile, SFO, National Minister, Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM, and Fr. Lester Bach, OFM Cap.

The Innovations of Francis: Mission & Testimony

On November 7th 2005, Fr. Lester Bach, OFM Cap. and I presented at the General Chapter in Assisi. At this Chapter, there were representatives from 60 countries. In the coming issues of TAU-USA, I will continue to summarize our presentations.

We approached the issue of Franciscan Novitas from three perspectives.

- 1) What is our vision of Church for today, reflecting both on the early Church and the Church of Vatican II;
- 2) How did Francis influence his world and give new life to gospel living, examining his call to rebuild the church;
- 3) What is the vision of Secular Franciscans today according to the Rule of 1978?

Keep in mind that Fr. Lester will speak to the vision in each of our three talks, and I will share how the vision might be given flesh in the Church and the Secular Franciscan Order.

Vision

Let us begin with this thought in mind: if we are Church in the fullest sense, what would that look like? Luke in the Acts of the Apostles gives the example.

Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need. Acts 4:32-35 – NRSV

Luke writes that everything was held in common. This indicates that the community of believers shared their possessions so that no one would be in need. Since some **structure** is needed, the apostles were responsible for the distribution of the material gifts. The individual Christians recognized their responsibility for personal stewardship. This enabled the early community to care for anyone in need. The **vision** that Luke proclaims illustrates that a sense of stewardship, i.e. sharing of all things, is one ingredient of community life. It does not mean it is easy nor does it persist in this pristine form. Within a few chapters, the Acts of the Apostles will show the presence of conflict. Christians were not sharing everything with the community. We see the consequences of clinging to possessions. We see that not everyone was of one mind and heart. The Acts of the Apostles shows the development of a structure that serves to implement the **vision**.

As time passes, the community faces conflicts and finds ways to deal with them. As an entity grows in numbers, the development of a structure is a natural consequence. What at first seemed simple becomes complicated. It becomes necessary to have a way to discern a correct understanding of the gospel. A structure is needed to assess procedures and practices that would enable the Church to bear witness to the resurrection with great power, i.e. to proclaim the **vision** of the gospel – to evangelize!

In the early Church both **vision and structure** contributed to evangelization, i.e. Christians proclaiming the gospel to the whole world. The danger, as time went on, was that some **Church** structures began to be more important than the **vision**.

One task in this series is to renew our vision of Church and Order while recognizing that it is supported by the structure and to ensure that the structure does not dominate nor diminish the vision, but serves to promote it.

Vatican II gives flesh and direction to the vision!

Vatican II gives flesh and a sense of direction to the vision in these times of the third millennium. Vatican II put a new emphasis on the universal call to holiness and making the Gospel accessible to all people. Therefore, the People of God want to share with the whole world their own inner nature and mission.

Listen to how the People of God are described in Lumen Gentium: *We can say that we, the Church, are a people united by our common heritage: created in love by God, assembled in the name of Jesus, and bound together by the Holy Spirit.*

Lumen Gentium (Par 4) as found in: Vatican II in Plain English - Vol 2- Wm Huebsch & Paul Thurmes - 1996 - Page 24

Vatican II reminds us of our vision of joy and hope with Christ in the Gospel. Lumen Gentium (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church in the Modern World) lays the basis for examining how the Church interacts on the world stage. I will describe it in my own words. No longer are we to be an entity to ourselves. We are to share the Light of Christ with all people for He is Lumen Gentium, the light of humanity. Therefore, the Church, as the People of God, finds itself in every race and nation. The laity are exhorted to proclaim the Kingdom of God in the temporal affairs of the world. As such, we are to be in the forefront of evangelization, proclaiming God by our words and deeds. The family is the preeminent place of evangelization for our Church. It is the domestic Church. Lumen Gentium sets forth the universal call to holiness: all persons, regardless of their state in life, are called to be holy.

Each one of you is a son of God because of your faith in Christ Jesus. All of you who have been baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with him. There does not exist among you Jew or Greek, slave or freeman, male or female. All are one in Christ Jesus. Furthermore, if you belong to Christ you are the descendants of Abraham, which means you inherit all that was promised.

Galatians: 3:26-29

The Spirit unifies us all in love. We are family. When Christ is the center of our lives, we are bonded to each other. We are brothers and sisters. Christ is our brother. We have a relationship with one another that is understood. No words have to be said when I see your Tau cross. **I may not know your name but I know you.**

Vatican II explains our relationship in this way:

We are, in fact, the very Body of Christ! But what does this mean, to call ourselves the “Body of Christ?” First, it means that we are united with Christ in a remarkable way because of baptism, which forms us in Christ’s image. In baptism, every aspect of Christ’s being: life, death, resurrection, takes root in us, body and soul. And second, in the Eucharist, that which was begun in baptism is constantly nourished and affirmed. In the Eucharist, we experience real communion, true fellowship, and undeniable connectedness with Christ and all people. By these two sacraments we become full members of the Church, and members of the Body of Christ. What we’re actually saying here, is that the Church is the Body. Lumen Gentium (Par7) - Ibid – Page 26-27

Therefore, if we claim to be the Church, and we claim to be the Body of Christ, then we must resemble Christ as much as possible in everything: our thoughts, our words, our actions. We are the Church. We are joint heirs with Christ and are commanded to love as Christ loved.

The challenge that we face today is to renew the sensitivity of the vision by assuring that the structures do not dominate or diminish the vision, but serve it and promote it. Our vision is to resemble Christ as much as possible. **Not only do we share his message, but we are called to BE his message.** We cannot receive Christ in the Eucharist and go back into our homes, our places of employment and be uninvolved in the world around us.

Therefore: Secular Franciscans must take in those who are afflicted, forgotten, and suffering. The Church itself, like its members, is always in need of being renewed and forgiven, purified for its mission, which is the same as the mission of Christ. Our deepest source of strength will come from the Eucharist and our highest moments of spiritual insight will come from the Body of Christ. Because the Spirit has given each of us a gift and promises to assist each one of us in using it, we will use this gift to promote the Kingdom of God. Our God calls us. God has become one of us in Jesus Christ, so that we might be united as human beings. That being said, everyone who is baptized is charged with the mission to present the Gospel to the whole world, so that people can share in God’s love. Secular Franciscans are among the people charged with this mission.

My brothers and sisters, we have been called.

WE ARE THE PEOPLE OF GOD!

Impressions: Reflections for a New Year

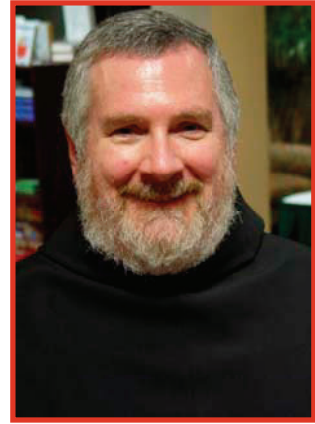
By Father Kevin Queally, TOR

Each year for several decades now, the Holy Father has issued a message on January 1 for the celebration of the World Day of Peace. When this document crossed my desk, along with the statement from the U.S. Catholic Bishops' Conference on the war in Iraq, it seemed a propitious time to reflect on peace and our commitment to it as Franciscans.

It is clear that not all of us have the same thinking as regards the war in Iraq. No doubt many will disagree with the U.S. bishops' call for a "responsible transition" there. At the same time, we are all Catholics and Franciscans, so it would be helpful for us to think and pray about the messages from our Holy Father and bishops. Perhaps we can all grow together if we have a common reflection. The documents, easily available and distributed on the SFO Justice and Peace Network, could serve for our fraternities' use in continuing formation.

Pope Benedict entitles his message "In Truth, Peace." It is a challenging message in many respects, even though relatively brief at sixteen paragraphs. While there is much that is worth reflecting on, a quote might help to focus the discussion: "In view of the risks which humanity is facing in our time, all Catholics in every part of the world have a duty to proclaim and embody ever more fully the 'Gospel of Peace,' and to show that acknowledgment of the full truth of God is the first, indispensable condition for consolidating the truth of peace." (Paragraph 11) Earlier in the letter, our Holy Father reflects on the necessity of truth for peace, and even says: "...wherever and whenever men and women are enlightened by the splendor of truth, they naturally set out on the path of peace." (Paragraph 3)

Clearly, we, as Franciscans, are also called to the "truth of peace," just as Pope Benedict says all Catholics have this duty to proclaim the "Gospel of Peace." Probably every day, each of us prays, "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace." We love to sing the song as well. These words may not be words written by Saint Francis himself, but we all like to claim that they embody his teachings and his spirit. So the challenge is clearly ours. We want to proclaim peace, embody peace, in our homes and in all our relationships, in our communities and parishes, in our workplaces and in our neighborhoods. Yet, our yearning for peace cannot end there. We are called to be instruments of peace on earth as well, fulfilling the duty the Holy Father mentions. In what way can each



Fr. Kevin

of us and all of us together be instruments of peace? There are many ways to do that, but the message is that we can all do something. First and foremost, of course, is prayer. Very often, prayer leads to action, and in light of the gospels and the Church's teachings, we can each discern how we are to live this call.

However, the whole Order is called to be involved in peacemaking as well. One might say that there is the scandal of divisions among us. How many fraternities and regions find themselves with a lack of peace! One might recall what Saint Paul said: "Brothers and sisters, in the name of God, be reconciled!"

Additionally, there must be some outreach. One way in which this is being furthered is in the work of Franciscans International. This is an organization open to all Franciscans worldwide. The work of this group at the United Nations is supported and reviewed by the Ministers General of the OFMs, Capuchins, Conventuals, TORs, SFOs and the IFC-TOR (International Franciscan Conference – TOR, the organization comprised of all the sisters groups following the TOR rule worldwide). As a non-governmental organization at the United Nations, it has received the highest level of recognition and has become well known for its work furthering the goals of the Franciscans which are in keeping with the Charter of the United Nations, specifically, peacemaking, care for creation and concern for the poor. It might be good for fraternities that have not done so to look into joining Franciscans International, receiving the materials and cooperating with the projects when possible and appropriate.

The document "Toward a Responsible Transition in Iraq" is a statement by Bishop Thomas Wenski of Orlando. He is chair of the USCCB Committee on International Policy. He is very direct as he calls for meaningful dialogue. "Our nation cannot afford a shrill and shallow debate that distorts reality and reduces options to 'cut and run' versus 'stay the course.'" It would be helpful to apply our Holy Father's admonition here about truth and peace. The forthright discussion with an honest assessment called

for by Bishop Wenski seems to be a place to start. Can our fraternities have a forthright discussion?

Bishop Wenski says, "It is well known that our bishops' Conference repeatedly expressed grave moral concerns about the military intervention in Iraq and the unpredictable and uncontrollable negative consequences of an invasion and occupation." Pope John Paul II and the Holy See expressed similar concerns. Acknowledging this and speaking in a very rational and balanced way about where to go from here, the statement really challenges our thinking, no matter which side of the issue we are on. It is for this reason that I recommend it for our study and reflection.

Saint Francis went to the Sultan. We all love peace. May our prayers and actions during this still-new year lead to the furtherance of God's kingdom by our living the Gospel and proclaiming in every place the Gospel of Peace. May God bless us all and make us instruments of His peace.

Two New Dedicated Faces at CNSA

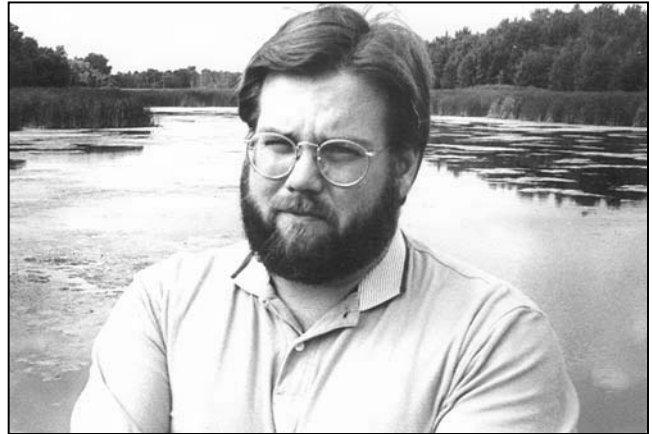


Fr. Bart

Fr. Bart is a member of the Companions of St. Anthony, an apostolate for evangelization. He provides individual spiritual direction and preaches parish missions, retreats, and days of recollection for priests, religious, and the laity.

The OFM representative to the CNSA is Br. Bob Brady, who resides in San Francisco, CA, where he is Provincial Spiritual Assistant for Santa Barbara Province. Brother Bob has worked with the Seculars for many years, providing spiritual assistance at the regional and local levels. He comes with a wealth of experience and dedication.

Fr. Bart A. Karwacki is the OFM Conventual representative of the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants. He was born in Riverside, N.J and now resides in Maryland, where he helps staff the Shrine of Saint Anthony along with providing spiritual assistance to Secular Franciscans on the local and regional level.



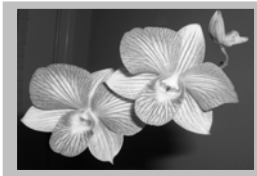
Fred Young, SFO is the New National Ecology Commission Chair

Fred Young is a Michigan native, who resides near the shores of Lake Superior in the Upper Peninsula. He was professed in 1983. He is a member of the St. Anthony of Padua Fraternity in Marquette, in the La Verna Region. Fred has been a member of the National Ecology Commission for the last two years and has served as Interim Chair, since March 2005.

Fred is currently teaching nature writing at Northern Michigan University where he interacts with young people on a daily basis. He is keenly aware of the spiritual dimensions of their lives and issues that are most important to them, including ecology and justice and peace. Fred has been an environmental activist since 1975 and is also a Franciscan scholar on issues that relate to the environment. He is the author of a master's thesis: "Green Enigma: St. Francis of Assisi – Deep Ecologist?" and a doctoral dissertation: "Deep Franciscanism and the Writing of Wildlife Management Plans."

With a strong commitment to the Ecology apostolate and the SFO, Fred hopes to work closely with other Apostolic Commissions to inspire the 21st century generation to the Franciscan way of life.

Most High, glorious God,
enlighten the darkness of my heart and give me
true faith—certain hope—and perfect charity,
sense and knowledge, Lord
that I may carry out
your holy and true command.
St. Francis



Regional Roundup

By Sandy Neal, SFO
mark-sandy@att.net

Mother Cabrini Region

Al Kath, SFO 1945-2005

Al Kath, our first National Public Relations Co-ordinator, went to be with the Lord on December 29th. He was appointed in March 1999 and covered the first All Commissions Conference at St. Bonaventure in June of 1999. Expanding commitment to his job with Western Catholic Union forced him to resign as PR person in July of 2000. Al had also been sports editor and feature writer for the Green Bay Packers and the Milwaukee Brewers. Al was a member of St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity in Frankfort, IL. He is survived by his wife Sandy, past minister of Franciscans of the Prairie Region. He was well liked and will be missed.

St. Thomas More Region



The SFO Family of the Year Award goes to Thecla and Terry McCarthy, Sr., from Tucson, AZ. Their 49 years of Franciscan witness and service to others and their

willingness to do God's work, even when it involved personal and family sacrifices, has inspired many people.

Five Franciscan Martyrs Region

Deacon Richard & Catherine Arsenault, SFO, of St. Augustine Fraternity, celebrated their 45th wedding anniversary with family, friends, and fraternity on Dec. 26th at the Carmelite Monastery in Korna, FL.

St. Maximilian Kolbe Region

Taking action to share the Franciscan charism with the multicultural groups in our region in Cleveland, OH, guest speaker, Therese Shin, SFO, Spiritual Assistant from Racine WI, spoke to the Koreans after Mass at St. Andrew Kim Church on Dec. 18. The Vietnamese heard Anthony Houg Le, SFO, Spiritual Assistant from Westminster, CA speak after Mass at St. Boniface Church. A follow-up process is now taking place with those who indicated an interest in learning more about St. Francis.

Our Stories

The
Road
Home
After
Katrina



By Ouida Tomlinson, SFO

Darkness is upon me, as I leave my doctor's office in Gulfport, Mississippi. I'm beginning to feel some anxiety, as I do not want to take any of my usual routes home from here, after the sun goes down. Going towards the beach, I notice once again the damaged homes from Hurricane Katrina. The railroad tracks, running parallel to the beach, create a sort of protective barrier or levee, so some of the structures remain. I cross the tracks, headed for Scenic Drive or U. S. Highway 90, which goes from Pascagoula to Pass Christian. The scene changes dramatically. There are no more damaged homes. There are no more homes.

On Scenic Drive, the Gulf waters are calm and serene on my left. On my right the scene is surreal, especially in the twilight. This drive was once lined with beautiful, historic homes and ancient live oak trees. Now, it seems like the aftermath of an atomic bomb. Mile after mile, I see the ghost-like shadows of the dead and dying trees with buildings, homes, businesses, churches all gone. The land is swept clean, and the growing darkness causes a greater sinister appearance.

All my landmarks are gone. I feel lost and afraid. Too late, I realize that I have missed Long Beach and my turn north to the Interstate. The next two possibilities are in Pass Christian. The damage is greater here, and the ways north more isolated. My anxiety grows. Highway 90 will end soon, as the bay bridge to Bay St. Louis is gone.

Then I see a sign ahead. "Detour—take Menge Avenue," with an arrow pointing the way. Thanks be to God. Menge takes me to the Inter-state. The interstate takes me to Diamondhead, and home. I am safe.

I Hold Babies

Excerpts from a Special Message
By Melissa McDougall, SFO

The conversation goes something like this, "I understand you go to Haiti." "Why, yes I do." "Well, what is it you DO in Haiti?" This is harder to answer than one would think, so I simplify and respond, "I hold babies." In America, we are defined by what we do and, all too often, by what we have. This concept is turned on its head in Haiti, where I am not defined by these standards. Rather, I try to define myself by God's ideal of HOW! How, Melissa, will you help Me? So, often with my simple answer of "I hold babies," I watch, as people are quizzical, or even uninterested. In our country, holding our babies is a given, and even seen, as rather insignificant by some. But to that dying child in your arms, it makes all the difference in the world.

As volunteers, we hold babies in various stages of death. All are skeletal. Most have worms in their bellies and bugs under their skin. All too many have AIDS or TB, so many are very sick, dying of curable diseases. As I approach, they implore me to come. Come hold me, come give me comfort. It is Jesus. He who has given me hands to be His hands now bids me to come to Him in the embodiment of His little ones, these babies. The Creator is calling me to hold his most precious ones. How divine! How truly blest I am.

I am often reminded, as I carry and love God's little ones, of the importance of a mother's love, a mother's touch. I look like a mom, perhaps a poor surrogate to these children, but they snuggle into my arms and thru that common link of human compassion and love, we are one. How close I am to the crucified Christ. I can touch and stroke his body, feel His breath on my cheek. His heart rests on mine and I am in a different realm. How often, I wonder, have I looked away?

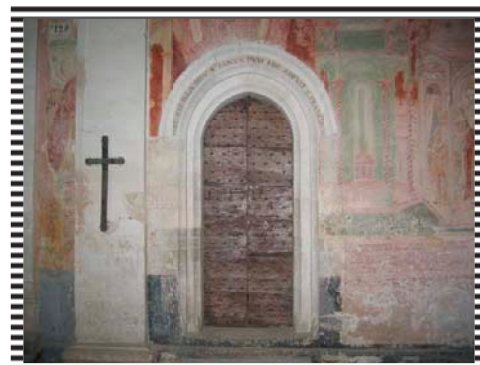
How meaningful Mary's suffering and Christ's passion is to me and I use her as my guide. I seek Mary and Jesus often through the day and they refresh my soul.

I am painfully aware of how close these little ones are to being with our heavenly Father, so I DO the only thing I can DO, I pray. I pray in Kreyól, so perhaps the last words these babies hear on their journey home is a prayer to Our Father, a prayer to Our Mother and to a triune God, in their language. Small things like this take on new importance. I dream of heaven for them. I imagine the loving arms of Jesus taking over for me, as they enter the Kingdom. I can feel the touch of angels' wings.

Soon they will no longer know misery, they will be home. And I pray. I hold babies, it's what I DO. A simple act with divine and eternal implications I cannot always comprehend. But, I no longer seek to understand, I seek to DO.

A New Ministry is Unfolding for Us

By
Bret & Katia
Thoman SFO
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St Francis passed through these doors in Forano, Italy

My wife and I are currently in formation at Immaculate Conception in Jonesboro, GA – to profess in 2006. We'd like to share our ministry story: In April of 2004, my wife, Katia (originally from Bari, Italy), and I participated in a series of retreats in Loreto, Italy led by the OFM friars of the Marches province. At the end of the retreat, the provincial, Father Ferdinando Campana, described ways for the laity to collaborate with his friars in evangelization. One such project was the *Terra dei Fioretti*, or Land of the Little Flowers.

The *Fioretti*, or "Little Flowers," was written in the 14th century, about 100 years after the death of St. Francis, and chronicled stories and legends of Francis and early, saintly friars. Historically, it has been considered a spiritual classic. The *Fioretti* was written by a friar in the Marches region, where many of the stories took place. The exciting thing is that many of the same hermitages and friaries mentioned in the book still stand today, but are virtually unknown to the public - they are still isolated in nature and are untouched by tourism. These places were used principally for contemplation, given the isolation of the Marches, aspects important to the early Franciscan Spirituals.

I found out that the friars had been organizing religious excursions through these places for about a year geared mostly toward local Italians. They would take the groups to the sites where the stories happened, read the story from the *Fioretti* or the *Omnibus* and conclude with a spiritual reflection. Katia and I, after much discernment and prayer, have decided to leave our careers in the US and move to Italy in order to assist with these excursions. *Pace e bene a tutti!*



Little Weeds

What a Difference

By M. Marko, SFO

There is a song, “What a Difference a Day Makes.” Well, a year makes even more of a difference. Did you have any idea this time last year exactly what you would have gone through by this time this year? (Say that five times real fast!) But a sense of balance is called for in that you can’t live only for today, but you can’t obsess about the future either.

Francis had the right idea: make the best use of your time now, and the future will take care of itself. This is not to say he didn’t think about the future. But he knew that if he lived his life the best way he could today, tomorrow would include his just rewards.

I’ve said it before – God doesn’t send you to hell; he just puts you on the train you bought the ticket for. Today is when you buy your ticket; tomorrow is when you get on the train.

You didn’t know where you’d be now this time last year, or what you would experience. But if you’re true to your formation and your pledge to the Gospel life, you can be sure that wherever you end up, it will be a good place.

But don’t think that means it’s gonna be a bed of roses along the way. Our lives are full of things that make us wonder what ticked God off. The fact is, though, that it’s the bad times that determine the paths we take, the decisions we make. Like, strokes are nice; but they don’t get you anywhere unless you’re swimming! It’s the “if it doesn’t kill ya, it’ll make ya stronger” things that really make the difference.

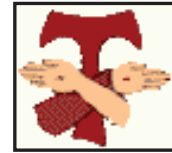
But I sincerely believe that line from the Bible, “All things work for the good of those who believe.” Maybe it’s simplistic of me. But I do think that if you believe, you’ll act accordingly; and if you act accordingly, it will work to your advantage in the end.

I also believe that everything happens for a reason. Unfortunately, God doesn’t always let us in on it. But if you trust in Him, it will always be bearable. Francis spent the last part of his life in a great deal of pain; but he never questioned it. He trusted that God knew what He was doing.

So be true to your vocation. Trust in God and live your days in the Gospel life so they make a *good* difference.

Classic Franciscan God’s Palette

By Julia Pearson, SFO



Secular Franciscan Anthony “Tony” Gawron lived the gospel and painted the sacredness he saw and felt around him. A longtime friend of the Catholic Worker, his painting of St. Francis being held by Our Lady of Poverty is hanging in St. Joseph House, 36 East First St. in New York City. At St. Joseph House, folks remember Tony “working the house” – managing the soup line, handling the phone, dealing with whatever and whomever God brought to the door. The soup line feeds 100-125 people off the street four days a week. About thirty people, mostly men, live there, with one floor for women. St. Joseph House has a folder of Tony’s drawings of people who passed through. Tony lived in Andrews Hotel, one of the last places in the Bowery where mostly poor, single men could rent single, cheap rooms. A devout Catholic and Secular Franciscan, Tony was a Navy veteran and anti-war activist. He was familiar and at ease with the homeless, the hungry, the tormented, and his generation’s lepers—those with AIDS.

Born June 14, 1946, Tony grew up with five brothers and one sister. He was a 1992 alumnus of the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, and graduated from the New York Academy of Art in 1994. His painting in the graduation exhibition was of the conversion of St. Francis embracing the leper. Tony was a founding member of the Artist Alliance and had a studio at its cooperative on the Lower East Side at Suffolk and Rivington Streets. A parishioner of Our Lady of Sorrows Church on Pitt St., Tony restored and repainted its Stations of the Cross and the statue above the altar of the Mother of Sorrows holding the body of Christ. He loved and was beloved in his church home, which was run by Franciscans. He urged everyone to come to Mass there and drink of the spirit of the music provided by the many Hispanic parishioners. Tanya Theriaul, who has been a worker at St. Joseph House for eight years, knew Tony. She remembers him as a quiet, modest man who lived very seriously and with purpose. She says emphatically, “This was a man who worked on his life.” Tanya tells of Tony peopling one of his paintings with the images of the babies of St. Joseph House as angels. Sister Death came unexpectedly and took the brush from Tony’s hands on September 2, 2005. A memorial exhibition of his work at the CVS Center was held on Sunday, October 2. Tony’s statement about his own art and examples of his work can be found at: http://www.artistsai.org/Long-term_Studios/pages/gawron_tony.html



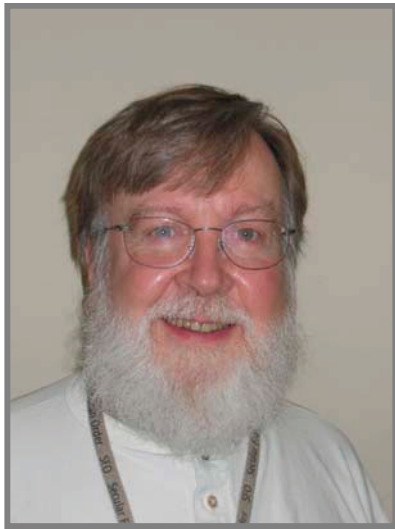
NEWS & VIEWS

Reports – Information – Recommendations – Reflections
For spiritual assistants at all levels
By Lester Bach OFM Cap

CHANGES AT CNSA

You have already been informed that Bart Karwacki has replaced Stephen Gross, as the OFM Conventual representative on CNSA.

Loren Connell has been replaced by Bob Brady, as the OFM representative on CNSA. Bob serves CNSA from California. Welcome aboard, Bob!



Loren Connell OFM

We thank Loren Connell OFM for his years of service to the SFO and CNSA. His quick responses on the NAFRA list have been a sign of a caring person. He readily shared ideas and opinions to “assist” the SFO in dealing with issues that arose. Working with Loren has been a good experience. He was honest and straightforward in communicating his ideas at our meetings. We will miss his delightful presence. Thanks much for your years of service, Loren!

CNSA – Conference of National Spiritual Assistants:

- Kevin Queally TOR - President-in-turn - represents the Third Order Regular
- Lester Bach OFM Cap - represents the Capuchin branch of the First Order.
- Bart Karwacki OFM Conv - represents the Conventual branch of the First Order.
- Bob Brady OFM - represents the OFM branch of the First Order.

REMINDER:

To Provincial and Regional Spiritual Assistants:

The annual meeting for PSAs and RSAs will be held at the Franciscan Retreat Center in Easton, PA from September 19, 2006 (evening) to September 22, 2006 (breakfast). Please mark your calendars!

(Revised) **HANDBOOK** for Spiritual Assistance to the SFO

We recommend that all spiritual assistants and councils have a copy of the revised *Handbook*. A copy of the *Life-giving Union* book would be good to have at hand. Check the back page of TAU-USA for information.

REGIONAL VISITATIONS

The Pastoral Visitation of the regions is conducted together with the Fraternal Visitation. It is a special time for everyone. The visitation serves as a time when both the visitor and visited share with one another on ways and means to enrich our Franciscan life. Such dialogue takes time.

We encourage the regional council to give plenty of time for the visitation. In addition to the formal things that are needed, it is important to have a common dialogue about our life and how we might live it more effectively. Such conversations can't be rushed. So give the visitation adequate time and then add some time. Local and regional spiritual assistants' presence is important for their part in the pastoral visitation.

Pages B6 and B7 in *The HANDBOOK for Spiritual Assistance to the SFO* offer an outline of the purpose of the pastoral visitation as well as some suggestions.

SFO GENERAL CHAPTER

Carol Gentile SFO and I were pleased to be part of the General Chapter in Assisi in November, 2005. We gave our talks as well as engaged in some elements of the Chapter. There were about 57 countries represented at the Chapter. It was good to be back home in Assisi.

Give me a sense of humor, Lord,
Give me the grace to see a joke,
To get some humor out of life,
And pass it on to other folk.

BROTHER JUNIPER



By Fred Mc Carthy, SFO

CLEAN UP! FIX UP! PLANT UP!

By Dolores Cullen, SFO
Humor Editor

The time for spring-cleaning is upon us.

Thought these snippets might get you in the mood.

Gals, did you know that the best way to get a man to do something is to suggest he is too old for it?

The easiest way to find something lost around the house is to buy a replacement.

Question: Why are retirees so slow to clean out the basement, attic or garage?

Answer: They know that as soon as they do, one of their adult kids will want to store stuff there.

Gardening Rule: When weeding, the best way to make sure you are removing a weed and not a valuable plant is to pull on it. If it comes out of the ground easily—it is a valuable plant.

On a Plumber's truck:

"We repair what your husband fixed."

The following is inserted to help you keep a proper perspective:

Dusting: A house becomes a home when you can write, "I love you" on the furniture. I can't tell you how many countless hours I have spent CLEANING! I used to spend at least 8 hours every weekend making sure things were just perfect, "in case someone came over."

Then I realized one day that no one came over; they were all out, living life and having fun!

Now, when people visit, I find no need to explain the "condition" of my home. They are more interested in hearing about the things I've been doing while I was away, living life and having fun. If you haven't figured this out yet, please heed this advice. Life is short. Enjoy it!

Dust If You Must:

Dust if you must...but wouldn't it be better to paint a picture or write a letter, bake cookies or a cake, or plant a seed, ponder the difference between want and need? Dust if you must...but there's not much time, with rivers to swim and mountains to climb, music to hear and books to read, friends to cherish and life to lead.

Dust if you must...but the world's out there with the sun in your eyes, the wind in your hair, a flutter of snow, a shower of rain.

This day will not come around, again.

Dust if you must...but bear in mind, old age will come and it's not kind.

And when you go—and go you must—yourself will make more *dust!*

My sister Darlene has the courage—but not always the skills—to tackle any home-repair project. For example, in her garage are pieces of a lawn mower she once tried to fix. So I wasn't surprised the day my other sister, Jesse, and I found Darlene attacking her vacuum cleaner with a screwdriver.

"I can't get this thing to cooperate," she explained.

"Why don't you drag it out to the garage and show it the lawn mower?" Jesse suggested.

Junk is something you've kept for years and throw away three weeks before you need it.

I've learned . . . that the less time I have to work, the more things I get done.

I've also learned . . . that the Lord didn't do it all in one day. What makes me think I can? And while you're in the throes of making everything spic and span, remember that the most important things in your home are the *people*.

National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order - USA

Quarterly General Fund Reports for Calendar Year 2005 as of December 31, 2005

Acct #	INCOME	Quarter Ending On:				TOTAL FOR BUDGET YEAR for 2005
		3/31/2005	6/30/2005	9/30/2005	12/31/2005	
6110	PER CAPITA	8,009.00	56,670.00	63,187.00	18,820.00	146,686.00
6120	INTEREST	215.58	300.30	502.65	628.37	1,644.90
6200	FORMATION SALES	7,980.85	9,038.32	14,990.56	16,395.09	48,384.82
6140	MISCELLANEOUS	36.00	139.04	286.64	425.68	36.00
	TOTAL INCOME	16,221.43	66,147.66	78,966.85	35,415.78	196,751.72

EXPENSES						
7110	CIOFS PER CAPITA	6,000.00			1,361.50	7,361.50
7120	NEWSLETTER	9,161.29	8,835.50	8,864.94	8,892.73	35,754.46
7130	ANNUAL MEETING	250.00	312.59	2,672.09	26,456.70	29,693.38
7140	COUNCIL OFFICERS	3,472.00	3,432.75	2,476.35	2,085.22	11,466.32
7145	CIOFS MEETING	2,273.20	3,250.00	704.60	6,227.80	6,000
7150	COUNCIL MEETINGS	4,646.27	5,140.52	1,000.00	1,259.00	12,045.79
7171	MULTICULTURAL CMITTEE		1,245.74	195.11	3,357.10	4,797.95
7172	PEACE AWARD CMITTEE					500
7173	NATIONAL ARCHIVES	1,490.76	-1,003.93	2,230.09	1,767.18	4,484.10
7175	HISTORIAN		109.94	713.75	857.74	1,681.43
	COMMISSIONS:					
7180	FORMATION-PRINTING	1,264.12	7,894.40	6,241.33	4,134.05	19,533.90
7181	FORMATION	1,172.68	2,532.28	2,226.23	4,519.88	10,451.07
7182	PEACE & JUSTICE	326.25	1,319.59		335.72	1,981.56
7183	FAMILY		2,279.58	7.79	502.20	2,789.57
7184	WORK	84.10	271.90	827.25	559.00	1,742.25
7185	ECOLOGY					3,000
7187	YOUTH	4,107.37	545.00	-369.12	957.28	5,240.53
7188	ECUMENICAL COMMITTEE	-127.00	1,332.21	363.74	1,404.11	2,963.06
7199	CNSA		3,000.00			3,000.00
7197	OTHER		825.00			825.00
	TOTAL EXPENSES	25,847.84	46,346.27	30,589.55	61,006.96	163,890.62

NET INCOME/(EXPENSE)	-9,626.41	19,801.39	48,277.30	-25,591.18	32,861.10	2,500
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Bank Balances of General Funds:

Beginning: CHECKING - HSBC	4,053.88	9,912.59	25,177.48	68,602.93
SAVINGS - HSBC	50,364.83	34,879.71	39,416.21	59,268.06
FI SOLIDARITY C U	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	
MERCHANT ACCOUNT	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
TOTAL - Beginning Bal.	70,418.71	60,792.30	80,593.69	128,870.99
Ending: CHECKING - HSBC	9,912.59	25,177.48	68,602.93	40,002.49
SAVINGS - HSBC	34,879.71	39,416.21	59,268.06	62,277.32
FI SOLIDARITY C U	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	
MERCHANT ACCOUNT	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
TOTAL - Ending Balance	60,792.30	80,593.69	128,870.99	103,279.81

Respectfully submitted by Dennis W. Ross SFO, National Treasurer

NATIONAL FRATERNITY OF THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER - USA

BUDGET FOR 2006
APPROVED ON SEPTEMBER 23, 2005

Account #	--- INCOME ---	BUDGET 2006 \$/10/MEEM	2006 PER CAPITA
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6110	FAIR SHARE @ \$10 (15,000 mem)	150,000	10.00
6120	INTEREST	500	0.03
6200	FORMATION BOOK SALES	29,000	1.93
6140	MISCELLANEOUS	500	0.03

TOTAL INCOME 180,000 12.00

--- EXPENSES ---

7110	CIOFS PER CAPITA	8,000	0.53
7145	CIOFS MEETING	0	0.00
7120	NEWSLETTER	30,000	2.00
7130	ANNUAL MEETING	37,500	2.50
7140	COUNCIL OFFICERS	15,000	1.00
7150	COUNCIL MEETINGS	15,000	1.00
7160	CIOFS VISITATION	2,500	0.17
7180	FORMATION - PRINTING	25,000	1.67
7135	QUINQUENNIAL		
7311	ALL COMMISSION CONFERENCE		
7181	FORMATION	13,000	0.87
7182	PEACE & JUSTICE	4,000	0.27
7183	FAMILY	2,500	0.17
7184	WORK	2,500	0.17
7185	ECOLOGY	2,500	0.17
7187	YOUTH	4,000	0.27

MISCELLANEOUS:

7188	ECUMENICAL COMMITTEE	3,500	0.23
7171	MULTI-CULTURAL COMMITTEE	3,500	0.23
7172	PEACE AWARD COMMITTEE	0	0.00
7173	ARCHIVES	4,000	0.27
7175	HISTORIAN	3,000	0.20
7176	COMPUTER COMMITTEE	1,500	0.10
7199	CONF. NAT. SPIRITUAL ASSIST.	3,000	0.20

TOTAL EXPENSES 180,000 12.00
NET INCOME (DEFICIT) 0

National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order - USA

Quarterly Financial Report for Calendar Year 2005

RESTRICTED FUNDS REPORT

Acc#	DUNS SCOTUS GRANT BALANCE	Quarter Ending On:				YEAR TOTAL	ENDING BALANCE
		3/31/2005	6/30/2005	9/30/2005	12/31/2005		
8220	LEGAL & OTHER EXPE	2,612.47	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,612.47
	OTHER RESTRICTED FUNDS						
7307	DONOR FUND	2,956.60	13,472.79	-1,250.00	-4,000.00	7,699.79	10,656.39
7310	CIOFS OFFICE FUND	0.00	900.00	-764.50	657.00	-792.50	0.00
7311	ALL COMMISSION FUN	0.00		4.94		-4.94	0.00
7313	ARCHIVES FUND	3.93		-3.93		-3.93	0.00
7314	FORMATIONAL COMM F	4,000.00		-2,028.78	75.00	-1,953.78	2,046.22
7315	ECUMENICAL COMM F	1,750.00	1,000.00			0.00	1,750.00
7318	SOUTH ASIA TSUNAMI	0.00	396.00	394.43	258.02	1,048.45	1,048.45
7335	QUINQUENNIAL FUND	23,381.17	-15.00	-515.30	-360.90	-1,077.45	21,412.52
	TOTALS	34,704.17	15,753.79	-4,163.14	-4,370.88	-2,397.89	4,821.88

DUNS SCOTUS SECULAR FRANCISCAN FORMATION TRUST FUND

	Available Investment		Total Value
	for Grants	Account	
12/31/01 Trust Fund Balance	7,275.22	462,650.00	469,925.22
Investment gains/losses	104.48	-86,476.00	-86,371.52
Grants Approved	-3,000.00		-3,000.00
Grant Refunds	5,052.69		5,052.69
12/31/01 Trust Fund Balance	9,432.39	376,174.00	385,606.39
Investment gains/losses during 2003	45.00	93,081.00	93,126.00
12/31/01 Trust Fund Balance	9,477.39	469,255.00	478,732.39
Investment gains/losses: during 2004	51.00	49,942.00	49,993.00
12/31/01 Trust Fund Balance	9,528.39	519,197.00	528,725.39
Investment gains/losses: First Quarter	25.00	-14,873.00	-14,848.00
6/30/05 investment gains/losses: Second Quarter	34.00	6,605.00	6,639.00
9/30/05 investment gains/losses: Third Quarter	45.00	21,792.00	21,837.00
##### investment gains/losses: Fourth Quarter	51.00	10,230.00	10,281.00
Trust Fund Balance	9,683.39	542,951.00	552,634.39

MAFRA - USA - SFO REGION SUMMARY REPORT FOR 2005

Reg #	REGION'S NAME	Established	ESTAB. EMERG. FRAT.	EMERG. FRAT.	NEW FRAT.	YOUTH FORM. GROUP	LAST REPORT	FAIR SHARE DURING 2005	PC#
50	OHANA O KE ANUENUE	10/25/91	4	1	0	0	2005	\$490	49
51	FIVE FRANCISCAN MARTYRS	10/23/92	33	1	2	0	2004	\$6,870	687
52	ST FRANCIS	10/29/93	29	3	2	2	2004	\$9,560	956
53	BL JUNIPERO SERRA	10/29/93	29	1	5	0	2005	\$6,430	643
54	TROUBADOURS OF PEACE	10/23/92	13	1	0	0	2005	\$2,900	290
55	QUEEN OF PEACE	10/23/92	30	1	1	0	2003	\$5,020	502
56	DIVINE MERCY	10/29/93	28	2	1	0		\$7,840	784
57	ST MARGARET OF CORTONA	10/29/93	32	0	1	0	2005	\$8,120	812
58	ST THOMAS MORE	10/29/93	8	1	3	1	2005	\$2,260	226
59	MOTHER CABRINI	10/23/94	22	2	1	0	2005	\$8,120	812
60	ST JOAN OF ARC	10/29/93	14	2	1	0	2004	\$5,189	283
61	BRO & SIS OF ST FRANCIS	10/23/94	24	2	6	0	2005	\$3,370	337
62	EXALT. OF THE HOLY CROSS	10/29/93	3	1	1	0	INACTIVE		0
63	FRAN. OF THE PRAIRIE	10/23/94	9	1	0	0	2005	\$2,970	297
64	HOLY TRINITY	10/23/94	20	3	2	0	2005	\$3,140	314
65	LA VERNA	10/12/95	19	1	0	0	2005	\$5,030	503
66	OUR LADY OF INDIANA	10/23/94	17	0	0	0	2004	\$2,177	218
67	LOS TRES COMPANEROS	10/23/94	22	2	0	1	2005	\$2,770	277
68	LADY POVERTY	10/23/94	28	1	1	0	2005	\$5,090	509
69	ST KATHARINE DREXEL	10/23/94	34	0	0	1	2005	\$9,530	953
70	ST MAXIMILIAN KOLBE	10/23/94	22	2	0	0	2005	\$5,640	564
71	BL KATERI TEKAKWITHA	10/23/94	30	2	0	0	2005	\$5,390	539
72	SANTA MARIA DE LAS MONT.	10/23/94	13	1	3	0	2005	\$1,940	194
73	OUR LADY OF THE ROCKIES	10/12/95	7	0	0	0	2005	\$870	87
74	ST CLARE	10/12/95	10	0	1	0	2003	\$2,440	244
75	OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE	10/12/95	23	0	2	2	2005	\$3,910	391
76	FR SOLANUS CASEY	10/17/96	38	0	5	0	2004	\$9,830	983
77	OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS	10/12/95	48	3	0	0	2004		0
78	ST ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY	10/17/96	47	0	0	0	2005	\$9,150	915
79	THE TAU CROSS	10/16/97	40	2	0	0	2005	\$8,860	886
80	JUAN DE PADILLA	10/17/96	12	2	0	0	2005	\$1,780	178
	Totals		708	38	38	7		\$146,686	14,433
	Average of 30 regions		24	1	1	0		\$4,890	481

Post-Vatican II Secular Franciscan Identity

By Anne H. Mulqueen, SFO
NAFRA Formation Co-Chair
Anne_Mulqueen@juno.com

Forty years after the close of the Second Vatican Council, some of us can still remember the priest with his back to the congregation as he celebrated mass. We can recite the Our Father in Latin. Communion lines were shorter. Confession lines were longer. Women covered their heads. All knelt at the altar rail. There was an altar rail! All received Communion on the tongue. Our role was more of a spectator rather than a participant.

Vatican Council II reaffirmed for us that, by virtue of our baptismal grace, all are called to sanctity, that there is no distinction among us – we are radically equal, and all are entitled to equal dignity. The Council stated, unequivocally, that the lay faithful were co-responsible with the religious and clergy for the life and mission of the Church.

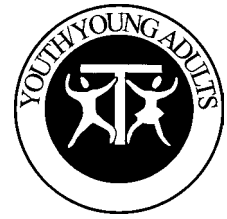
St. Francis understood and proclaimed in the 13th century, what the Council decreed 40 years ago. In essence, both St. Francis and the Second Vatican Council recognized that we have a share in the responsibility of the Church's mission to spread the Gospel of Christ to the ends of the earth. St. Francis, our inspiration, understood that the first step in the evangelical life is a "...radical interior change which the gospel itself calls conversion." (Rule, Art. 7)

St. Francis was a Gospel purist. He acted on Gospel inspiration. The Gospels provided direction for his and his brothers' lives. Our Rule tells us to consider the Gospels as "...the gift of the Father's love, [and] the way to him, [and] the truth into which the Holy Spirit leads us...going from Gospel to life and life to Gospel." (Art. 4) The Gospels led Francis into new and deeper insights into God's love and God's will. Following Francis' example, we are not to be discouraged by our or other's imperfections "...trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon." (Art. 19)

Fraternity is our path to God. It's not a smooth path. It often becomes rocky and overgrown with thorn bushes. Fraternity makes the journey bearable - sometimes. And sometimes, the rocks and thorn bushes are the fraternity. If we persevere, these challenges become virtues of kindness, faithfulness, hope, and love. Christ and his disciples, St. Francis and his brothers, lived the life of fraternity. Fraternity is our privileged place. We live, pray and minister with imperfect people just like ourselves. In conclusion, if we remain faithful to our Secular Franciscan vocation, we will fulfill the mandate of the Second Vatican Council and the inspiration of our Father Francis.

Liturgy

Lori Taormina, age 22
Queen of Peace
Regional Youth/Young Adult Chair



When we are called to Worship, we are called to be the Assembly of God. Liturgy is the communal celebration of this assembly by the church. It is people gathering, not only to encounter God, but also to participate fully and to give service to others. Liturgy came alive for me with the millions of youth during World Youth Days 2005.

I departed for Vossenack, Germany, to the Youfra gathering, by putting my trust in God. Praising and worship was happening when we first stepped through the doors. I didn't know what we were singing, but I laughed and danced with the rest of them. We became what God had planned; a Franciscan Family.

I discovered that liturgy not only happens in church, but in classrooms and meeting halls. We gathered for lectures, prayers, song, and dance. I saw myself becoming one with everyone through my interactions.

During the opening Youfra Mass we poured dirt from our hometown on the ground under the flagpole. My heart was bursting with joy, as I felt truly connected with Christ and his people. We were raising hands our hands towards the heavens, and singing like our lungs were going to burst.

With my new Franciscan family and my heart renewed with the love of Christ, our small group set out for World Youth Day.

Liturgy means more than just "Mass." For our group, we worshiped at night with a closing prayer and in the morning with prayer and reflection. Liturgy also occurred for me on our long walks to our destinations, and on the school playground.

Our pilgrimage to be with Pope Benedict XVI for the vigil and closing mass was a challenge. I looked around at all who had gathered and knew that we were a sign of God's Reign to the world. Once gathered, we became a sign of God's promise to us all and to our Church. It also reminded me that my faith is greater than just me; it became a night of prayer and peace. I only hope that the Eucharist that I received from Pope Benedict XVI does not stay within my body, but is a living sign of my faith to all. I hope to bring the Eucharist out into the world and share it with others through my actions and service.



Presence in the World Part I

By Carolyn Colburn, SFO
NAFRA Peace & Justice Chair
colburn@sonic.net

The Early Friars

For those of us concerned with social justice, it is interesting to read about how Francis saw the social world in which he lived, and if he wanted to change it. French Medievalist Jacques Le Goff has speculated about this in his biography, *St. Francis*, translated by Christine Rhone. Routledge, New York, NY 2004.

Francis saw his social world in two parts that were unequal and opposed. The pauper was opposed to the powerful. More important than the division was the gap between the two groups. Francis wanted to bring these groups together into one equal society. The undervalued would be raised, and the superior would be lowered. He knew there was no hope of achieving such a leveling in all of society, so he tried to establish it as a model in his fraternity. In receiving as brothers both clergy and laity, between whom there was a great barrier in medieval times, he hoped to create a new, leveled fraternity that was neither completely secular nor completely ecclesiastic. Any source of inequality, birth, rank or knowledge, was to be completely rejected. Relationships would be based on a family model. He would be the father and the brothers living in hermitages would take turns being mothers and sons. He was not allowed to do this. He had to accept the structure of an Order imposed on him. (Le Goff pages 75-80; 90-91)

Centuries later, two popes, Paul VI and John Paul II, would call for a social realignment among nations based a family model. "Man must meet man, nation must meet nation, as brothers and sisters, as children of God. In this mutual understanding and friendship, in this sacred communion, we must also begin to work together to build the common future of the human race." (*Populorum Progressio* #43) Just as in a family the stronger members place themselves at the service of the weaker, so developed nations should share their knowledge and technology with weaker nations and allow them to become equal members of the family of nations. (Compendium #475) Secular Franciscans who join in this effort are following in the footsteps of Francis.



"BE – attitudes" Computer List Serve For SFOs

By Pauline Cahalan, SFO
NAFRA Work Chair
paulinesfo@earthlink.net

Teresa Redder, a member of the NAFRA Work Commission, has started a computer list serve for SFOs who are interested in joining an e-mail group that would send out articles and other writings to help folks better understand the connections between Franciscan Spirituality and Work. When our Rule addresses Work, in Article 16, it means all moral and ethical work to better the Kingdom of God and to be God's hands and hearts while we are here on earth. This is paid or volunteer, in your home or outside the home, wherever you feel called to use your God-given talents. Our Franciscan Spirituality calls us, especially, to our work commitment as this relates to Catholic Social Teaching and the preferential option for the poor. In order to help any interested SFOs, and, particularly, those who have volunteered or been chosen to be Regional and Local Fraternity Work Commission Chairs, information below tells how to subscribe to the list serve. It is dedicated to those who specifically express interest in learning more about the relationship between Franciscan Spirituality and Work. "BE-attitudes," our list, will not be open to just any internet surfer so you can feel safe signing up. BE-attitudes can be a place for participants to conduct on-line discussions or ask for help with related matters. Once things are posted on our e-mail list, feel free to download the articles and other materials for printing in regional and local fraternity newsletters or distributing in other ways you think appropriate. All materials must be attributed to the appropriate source(s). Anyone with questions about how to use material from the list serve in other publications or presentations can e-mail me so I can make sure this is done correctly. For those of you looking for helpful websites we will also list those after they have been screened.

If someone wants to join, please e-mail:

BE-attitudes-subscribe@yahoo.com Leave the subject line blank, as no message is needed - or e-mail Teresa at tredder@verizon.net.

We, the members of the NAFRA Work Commission, sincerely hope this is a fruitful resource for all SFOs. May God bless you and your loved ones.



Family Plans

Ken & Kim Flanagan, SFO
NAFRA Family Commission Co-chairs
kflanagan@catholic-charities.org

The National Family Commission has been in transition this past year. The past months have been quite busy since we assumed responsibility to carry on the leadership from the acting co-chairs, Rich and Roanne Fetkovich in April 2005.

Here are some of the major activities and plans for the Commission in the New Year. We are responsible for the "Living by Faith" letter to the homebound and twice a year the Family Commission publishes a newsletter to provide resources and ideas for family related activities that can be promoted on the regional and local fraternity level. Annually, the Commission facilitates the Family of the Year nomination process. The purpose of this activity is to highlight a family who lives out the Franciscan charisms through family and community life. Terry and Thecla McCarthy, Sr. of Tucson, Arizona, are this year's family. More on this event will be forthcoming in the TAU-USA.

In addition to continuing with these activities, during 2006, the Family Commission plans to be involved with the following:

- Survey the regions and local family commission leadership to determine what work/activities are already occurring regarding family ministry/outreach, as well as, identifying gaps and needs.
- Develop a "tool kit" which would allow already or developing programs/activities to be easily replicated in other regions and fraternities.
- Promote the idea of having the National Family Commission be viewed as a "resource generator" of materials and training for regional and local family commissions.
- Redesign the website to be a place where resources and family related information can be posted.

The members of the National Family Commission; Ken and Kim Flanagan, Co-Chairs, Diane Halal, L. Dorothea MacNeil and Alina Zygmunt look forward to being of service this year and promote the role of family in our Order, our Church and Our Society.

The National Ecology Commission

By Fred Young, SFO
NAFRA Ecology Commission Chair
fyoung@up.net



With the departure of Bill Fontenot, SFO, as the last Chair of the National Ecology Commission, I, Fred Young, SFO, have accepted the appointment as the new chair. Following in the footsteps of Bill will be a challenge because of his strong and effective leadership.

My academic background is in environmental studies coupled with years of "on-the-ground" activism. Among the most pertinent issues confronting the National Ecology Commission is fulfilling the responsibility of the commission of stressing the Stewardship of Creation. Remember, we are the "Green Order" in the Church. St. Francis is the patron saint of this issue and we are called to act. With this in mind I have set out to reconstitute the commission with members who are fully committed to this premise. To date, Rob Breen, SFO, a Ph.D. candidate in environmental policy and the founder of the Franciscan Ecology Center in Syracuse, New York, has been appointed. Other appointments include Clara Falzone, SFO, a nurse with a passion for environmental issues of Southgate, Michigan, and Sarah Mulholland, SFO, of Bend, Oregon. Sarah has been a long-time leader at the national level and a great source of wise counsel. Fr. Larry Bernard, OFM of Laguna, New Mexico remains our steadfast Spiritual Assistant.

The National Ecology Commission will have a retreat in early February where we will formalize our agenda. In the discussions with new appointees, issues of communication within the SFO, have been stressed. Also, Ecology Commission members are committed to working with other commissions to inspire others to the Franciscan way of life for the benefit of the SFO. Finally networking with organizations such as the Green Cross, The Religious Campaign for Forest Conservation, Au Sable Institute, Franciscans International, and the Evangelical Environmental Network will be discussed.

We are always open to new ideas and would love to hear from those who have suggestions. I may be reached at fyoung@up.net.

CDs and Archives

By Sharon Deveaux, SFO
National Archivist

Nowadays, CDs are everywhere. They can be used to store substantial amounts of information, so it is not surprising that historical information is being found on CDs too. This information is generally in the form of photographs and text (sorry no music or movies yet) and needs to be properly preserved. Here are some guidelines for consideration: CD-Rs, which are write only, are better for long term storage. Use CDs from major companies like: Fuji, Kodak, and Maxell, because they manufacture their own discs which are more reliable with better quality and are consistent from batch to batch. Never use old CDs, their life expectancy begins at the time of manufacture, not when the data is recorded. Gold colored CDs are thought to be more stable than silver, but they are more expensive. Always handle by the outer edge and never touch the surface. The disc is very delicate and a scratch can destroy data. To label a CD, it is important to use only proper CD labels, which are put on with an applicator for good balance as the disc is played (spins). If not using labels, use only non-solvent or water-based felt markers. Always store the disc in a jewel case upright like a book. Store in a cool, dry, dark place and avoid rapid and extreme changes in temperatures (39 to 68 degrees is good). Check the CDs for deterioration by playing them yearly. For discs that are used frequently, make a working copy and a copy for safe storage. Every 5 years, copy the data to a new disc, so the software and hardware is current. The life expectancy averages 5 years, though the best quality CD will last 50 years. Lastly, it is ironic that good quality paper is still a more stable medium.



Multicultural Theme at Quinquennial 2007

By Sonia Bernardo, SFO
National Multicultural Chair
Jsbernardo@msn.com

We hope you are making plans to celebrate our diverse cultures at the Quinquennial Congress on July 3-8, 2007, at Steubenville, Ohio. See inside cover of this issue. Love, Sonia

An Ecumenical Franciscan

By Marcella A. Bina, SFO
National Ecumenical Committee Chair
Marcella_b@core.com



On September 3, 2000, John XXIII was elevated to Blessed in the process of canonization. This Roman Catholic Church Pontiff is also listed on the Episcopal/Anglican calendar and with the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans. It is, therefore, fitting that, as one of the unifying elements of our Franciscan Orders in the United States, the Joint Committee on Franciscan Unity recognize and adopt John XXIII as patron for this joint Franciscan committee.

Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli, Pope John XXIII, was born in 1881, the son of a peasant family in Sotto il Monte. As a youth, in 1893, Roncalli entered the diocesan seminary in Bergamo, Italy and it was in this seminary that he joined the Secular Franciscan Order. Once ordained, Roncalli's pastoral assignments introduced him to many different faith traditions. In the mid-1920s, he was sent to Bulgaria to serve its ecumenical, diplomatic, and pastoral dimensions, and to address Bulgarian Orthodoxy which was adrift.

Roncalli's concern for ecumenism was strongly observed in 1954 when he gave three lectures during the Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity on "The Church in the Slav world," "The Church and Separated Oriental Christians," and "The Church and Protestant Confessions." Roncalli wanted the movement toward Christian unity to have a regular place in Catholic teaching, preaching, and catechesis.

Blessed John XXIII is remembered as one of the few individuals making an impact on the 20th century. Most notable of his accomplishments was the gathering together and opening of the Second Vatican Council on October 11, 1963. It was this Church council that served as catalyst for our movement toward Christian unity.

- Highly recommended is the biography "John XXIII: Pope of the Century" by Peter Hebblethwaite, first published in 1984, then abridged by Margaret Hebblethwaite and reissued in 2000. This biography goes beyond the life of John XXIII and delivers insights into his open spirit and trust in God to lead him on his mission in life. Partly based on John's own 'Journal of a Soul' the reader will gain a greater appreciation for this Blessed Pontiff and for the unity he willed for all Christians.

"The National Center for the Laity perpetuates the Second Vatican Council's emphasis on the apostolate of the Catholic laity. The Center's newsletter *Initiatives - In Support of Christians in the World* is an excellent resource for those promoting the SFO's apostolic commissions. To be added to the *Initiatives* mailing list, e-mail editor Bill Droel at wdroel@cs.com"
Contributed by Ed Zablocki, SFO.

The Lady Poverty

By Evelyn Underhill
Francis and Clare in Poetry
Edited by Janet Mc Cann and David Craig

I met her on the Umbrian hills,
Her hair unbound, her feet unshod:
As one whom secret glory fill
She walked, alone with God.
I met her in the city street:
Oh, changed was
all her aspect then!
With heavy eyes and weary feet
She walked alone, with men.

Benediction

By Bro. Rick Wilson, TOR
Francis and Clare in Poetry
Edited by Janet Mc Cann and David Craig

*St. Anthony went to the mouth of the
river by the sea, and began to call the
fishes in God's name. Little Flowers of
St. Francis*

Evening genuflects,
While I kneel at the creek's edge
Watching bluegill
rise to tossed petals,
Wanting to write words,
right as rain
Smooth as skipped stones—
And release them when the aim
And balance are right.
Fish rushing to the rings of forever
As they must have done
To the poor man
of Padua's blessings,
While gathering prayers
in the dark.

Outwitted

By Edwin Markham

He drew a circle that shut me out—
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But Love and I had the wit to win:
We drew a circle that took him in.

I Shall Not Pass

This Way Again

Unknown

Through this toilsome world, alas!
Once and only once I pass;
If a kindness I may show,
If a good deed I may do
To a suffering fellow man,
Let me do it while I can.
No delay, for it is plain
I shall not pass this way again.

Resurrection

By Vinal Van Benthem, SFO

A square more holes than linen
For his hanky,
A bristly, smiling, hobo clown
Named "Frankie."
A sad, tramp, hobo clown
With a happy face.
He wears his rag-tag suit
With charm and grace.
A cardboard box from K-Mart
for his bed;
A tattered felt fedora
On his head.
In worldly terms
he doesn't own a thing,
But still he smiles—
A jester for the King.
He doesn't share from pockets
Lined with gold;
He shares his coat
When someone else is cold.
He doesn't give a
Dinner party for eight;
His love is food for
Those half-starved with hate.
He's neither short nor very tall.
He's neither stout nor lanky.
He's just the right size for a hug.
He's a hobo clown named
"Frankie"

Miniatures

By Claire Campbell, SFO

Where are the rainbows?
Where do they lie?
Study soap bubbles,
Not the twilight sky.
Search through lawn sprinklers,
And cool wet grass.
Or hold to the light,
A crystal glass.
God's pastel promise,
So soft, so wide,
Can be small enough
To grasp inside.

A Hummingbird's Morning Shower

By Frances Wicks, SFO

Hummer dove down
into a dandelion.
Caught by surprise,
but pleased by his thrashing,
her soft yellow head bobbed
at his passing
and showered him
with sprays of water fine.
She seemed to smile,
as he came back each time,
taking blessings from her,
while still bashing
with wings in a flutter
he kept dashing,
feathers fluffed,
embracing the cleansing wine.
Then he flitted
from flower to flower,
sipping from one,
ignoring the other.
Dandelion was here
for just such an hour
to provide what she could
for her brother,
who needed her
for his morning shower,
as much as she needed
strokes from another.

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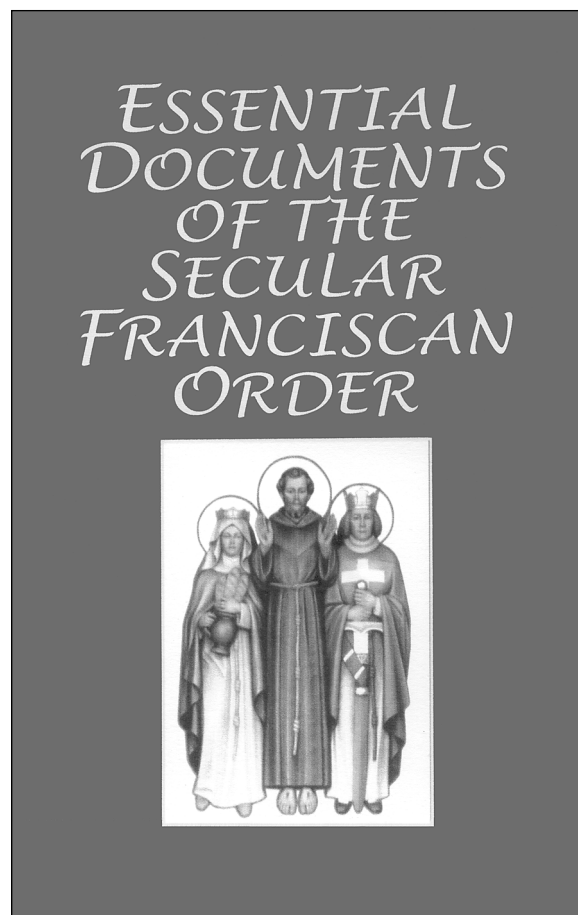
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