



# TAU-USA

The Newsletter of the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States  
Issue Number Forty-four ~ Autumn 2004



The  
Holy  
Spirit  
is  
Lifting  
us  
*HIGHER*  
than  
we've  
ever  
been  
before!



TAU-USA FALL 2004 ISSUE 44

**THE NEWSLETTER OF THE  
SECULAR FRANCISCAN  
ORDER IN THE UNITED  
STATES OF AMERICA**

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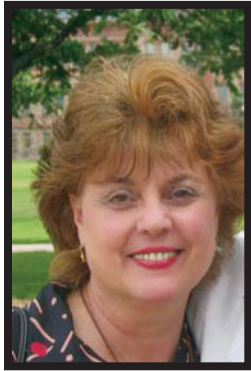
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Professed members of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States receive this newsletter without charge.

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# Minister's Insights: Staying on Track!

By Carol Gentile, SFO, National Minister



On June 17-20, 2004 an All Commissions' Conference took place at Regis University in Denver, Colorado. The theme of the conference was "Turning up the Flame." And, indeed, we did just that! All the participants were set ablaze. We had three

dynamic keynote speakers: Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM, a friar of Holy Name Province, Thérèse and Deacon David Ream, SFO, who served as Co-chairs of the National Formation Commission from 1996-2002, and Mary and Anthony Mazotti, SFO, appointed the first National Co-chairs of the Franciscan Apostolic Commissions.

## Moments to Share!

Fr. Richard spoke about the **passion** that martyrs have for their cause. Without entering into the cause for terrorism and the terrible phenomenon we face today, Fr. Richard made an analogy between the passion for a misunderstood cause by terrorists and the willingness to die for a cause like our saints who were made martyrs. He spoke about the passion one must have to lose one's life for a principle or cause. With determination in his voice, Fr. Richard emphatically said, "Where is the nerve that we have to risk all for the Will of God? Which is what Francis did!...Where is the courage to be driven by that unknown? You know - it is something that we know, the Will of God, and yet it's something unknown because we are constantly being told to do something, day after day, if we are serious about the process of conversion." "If we believe in the *incredible* we can do the *impossible*," said Fr. Richard. He used the example of St. Peter: when he took his eyes off of Christ, he sank into the water. His talk was about the passion we have for the culture that you and I drink in, Franciscanism in its most radical form. He continued to share with us that

we become Franciscans, not to become little Francises, but rather to come to Jesus. There are hands-on things that you and I must do about peace and justice in this world and no longer merely pray for peace and pray for justice, but to become peace and become justice. If we cannot do it with our own, then we are not going to do it out there! If peace and justice is not happening in your fraternity, then look into yourself, and find out why you can't do it and then how could we ever expect someone out there to do it for an entire nation. Fr. Richard calls this the Franciscan movement that we need to act upon.

He continues, "The message of Assisi needs to be shouted out once again and the commissions that we celebrate during this conference are doors through which this message will pass. We need the courage and the cooperation of God's grace to unlock those doors, so that the spirit of each commission will be able to live and breathe and to transform us from within. The commissions are the jumping off points to do the Gospel in our time. Christ is our passion. Christ our driving force. His agenda is our mandate. Radical Franciscan living out of the Gospel is going to really be the answer to what it is that we are being called to do." We all do the commissions on a daily basis in one form or another, however, Fr. Richard states that we can no longer rest on that feel good theory. "Whether we know it or not...NO! It is time we knew what we were doing and who we are and what we are about, living Secular Franciscan life, Franciscan life, on purpose, not by accident, by choice. We shouldn't be on automatic pilot but living fully aware of who we are and what we are doing. The potential Franciscan, Secular or Friar, will be that person who will admire the passion with which we pursue peace, justice, mercy and compassion." "Francis reminds us that it is not important to be constantly asking ourselves if we love our neighbor. What is important is to act out that love. We learn to walk by walking, to play by playing, and to love by loving. What is important is that we act out our love by loving. That is the spirit and passion to be courageous in giving Christ a home here on earth."

**"If we believe in the incredible, we can do the impossible!"**

Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM

The Reams focused on the mind and heart of Christ Jesus. Thérèse and David shared a story about a little girl who had a t-shirt that had these words across the front, “So much attitude, so little time.” Deacon David had this to say, “Could the same thing be said about us?” So many attitudes - do we really have attitude? Is the attitude really the mind and heart of Christ Jesus? And so little time - the urgency that is ours to preach the Gospel by the way we live in addition to the works we do. What is an **attitude**?

One understanding of an attitude is “the position of an object in relation to a given point of reference, usually on the ground level.” “In light of the title of this presentation, *Turning Up the Flame* – By Putting on the Mind and Heart of Christ Jesus, we Franciscan women and men must see ourselves as the objects called continuously to position and reposition ourselves in relation to a given point of reference, namely, the Rule of our Order, which truly can be understood as the ground and very foundation of our way of life. So are we called to have attitude? You betcha. Being Franciscan provides us with a particular frame of mind. A Gospel oriented perspective on the whole of our lives. Every aspect of our life experience must be viewed through this set of Franciscan tinted lenses.”

If every aspect of our life experience is viewed through a set of Franciscan tinted lenses, we can expect our face to reflect the peace from within. Just think, if we could put on the mind and heart of Christ Jesus, we could live on earth as we would in Heaven.

**“So much attitude, so little time! Is the attitude really the mind and heart of Christ Jesus? And so little time - the urgency that is ours to preach the Gospel by the way we live in addition to the works we do.”** Deacon David and Thérèse Ream, SFO

The Reams encouraged the participants to look at the Rule as an inspirational document, rather than a prescriptive one, which presents us with Gospel oriented and Gospel orienting attitudes and values. For example: (in Article 7, Formation) This radical, interior change we call conversion requires humility.

According to Mary and Anthony Mazotti, “the words “Commission or Commissioning,” are powerful words! They are **action** words signifying “Sacred Calling...to act in God’s behalf...for His special purpose: acts such as performed by angels, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, the Church...including all of us. Commissioning has holy roots in sacred history, in the Old and New Testament—and theological significance in the Gospels, Church documents and Franciscan Movement.”

Mary and Anthony Mazotti share this thought: “For Seculars who haven’t made the connection yet, the Commissions reflect God’s eternal plan of moving forward the full development and dignity of all of humanity and creation in Christ...using ‘us’ as His Co-Creators.”

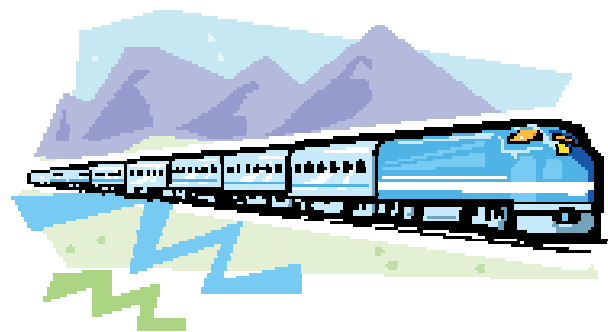
*James 2: 14-17*

*My brothers, what good is it to profess faith without practicing it? Such faith has no power to save one, has it? If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and no food for the day, and you say to them, “Goodbye and good luck! Keep warm and well fed,” but do not meet their bodily needs, what good is that? So it is with the faith that does nothing in practice. It is thoroughly lifeless.*

**“The Commissions reflect God’s eternal plan...”**

Mary and Anthony Mazotti, SFO

We will stay on track if we have the **passion** for the living Christ, the right **attitude** that reflects the mind and heart of Christ and the **action** to do His Will.



## ~Impressions~

By Lester Bach, OFM Cap.

Sometimes I feel that we “beat around the bush” when dealing with profession as Franciscans. We may want our way of life and our gatherings to be “nice.” Should comfortable positions be upset, we say how awful “those people” are who stretch us to places we don’t want to go. We blame them for requiring a wholeness to our Secular Franciscan life. At times we ignore the reality of fewer friars and act as though there is no problem. We expect to have ordained spiritual assistants even as it becomes clearly impossible. Perhaps we are into a “silent denial” of reality so that we can act as though everything is the same as it was years ago. (It isn’t!)

How honestly do we evaluate fraternity gatherings? If we keep doing what we always did, we’re content. But fraternity gatherings are meant to: *challenge, animate, form, enrich our Franciscan spirit, give support to our way of life, enrich relationships, deal with world issues, find better ways of living the SFO Rule, affirm one another, have a bit of humor, deal with homebound members, talk honestly and respectfully about political situations, share different prayer forms to enrich our prayer life, as well as encouraging contemplation.* Doing this regularly is quite a program to achieve in a few hours each month!

Are these expectations possible with one gathering a month? Do members even talk about change? We can pray about it. But good prayer leads to growth and change and action. Does that happen in our fraternities? How different is your fraternity today from what it was last year at this time? Are members more dedicated? Are they more passionate in their commitment to our way of life? Do they offer more challenges to one another and support one another more lovingly? Are members passive? Active? Does anyone want to run for office? Does everyone want someone else to do council work? Do they live the Rule more passionately? Is there anyone out there who cares one way or the other?

At the very least, we need to initiate serious dialogue about topics like these. Such conversations can offer insights about the way our future will look. Unless we are a vibrant group, why belong? St Francis learned about gospel relationships and they changed him. One leper made all the difference,

when the leper became a brother rather than an “object” to be helped. When people become brother and sister to us we treat them differently. A fraternity gathering is the place where we learn how to relate and love and care and forgive and celebrate together and spill over with joy as brothers and sisters. Or am I being naïve?

Fraternities around the USA differ from one another. Much depends on local leadership. Seculars who plunge into a passionate dedication to our way of life and are fully-committed Franciscans, stimulate new life in a fraternity. When people surrender to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the fire of passionate love touches lives and transforms Seculars as they transform their world. What excitement they cause! How rich is their inspiration to others who feel less sure of themselves.

How sad if we simply complain that something didn’t go our way. How sad that we spend so much time with members who fail to follow the Rule. How sad that anyone would think they know all there is to know about the SFO Rule or our Franciscan way of life. How sad to be indifferent about our life! A probing look at formation practices (both initial and ongoing) seems to be in order!

I hope these words stimulate your own creative ideas about fraternity life. I hope you begin to say: *Maybe there’s something here that needs consideration.* Begin serious dialogue about making things more alive in your fraternity. The Spirit is always present. The Gospel is always available. The Risen Jesus is with us and we are NOT orphans. The “call” is present to us. We need not act as though the end is coming when reality says we are on the brink of new beginnings. Free up your imaginations and wander into new possibilities. We never professed to be “nice.” We profess to be passionate about living the gospel, loving people; bringing peace to our world; learning richer forms of prayer; helping one another when life knocks us down; having great celebrations when life brings delight; rebuilding our Church so it reflects the gospel of Jesus! *That takes surrender and readiness to make radical changes in life – everyday.* Each of us, and our fraternities, need to become passionate Secular Franciscans – or we’ll just be “nice.” Uggh! Have the kind of passionate, respectful dialogue that will bring our Franciscan charism so alive among us that everyone will know who we are. OK?



# LIVING IN THE ANIMAL KINGDOM...OF GOD!

Churchtown-Amish Country, PA

By Ray Smecker



## IMAGE OF A TAU CROSS

...The nights have turned cooler...and the crops are ready for harvest—the image on the hill has turned from brown to green and now back to a Franciscan brown with a purple hue...and soon it will be gone—a part of the harvest—just like the multi-colored foliage of another passing season, but the Franciscan image that was plowed into the meadow on the hill above Shepherd Too this Spring will forever remain with me in my heart—

...This Spring, Shepherd Too was exploding with flowering bushes and trees; pears, crab apples, weeping cherries, forsythia—all adding their own colored blossomed embraces to the greening farming landscape—and all complementing the open and hilly and newly plowed farm fields that surrounded it and—the Amish farmers had just created their

plots, seeded their crops and changed their open meadows and planting fields...and the entire surrounding landscape... was a new.... and awash with the touch of His embraced images...

...The traditions of this farming valley had been followed...and a new planting season had begun...and now we all awaited the fall harvest...the scene was set for another year in the country...A NEW BEGINNING—and then the harvest...

...And as the shepherd of Shepherd Too...one Spring morning, I strolled down the woodsy pathway that was showered with tiny fallen petals of pink and white and yellow and red...it looked like there had been a parade in the Heavens above—there must have been for natures multi- colored petals of confetti were strewn all over Shepherd Too—

...And as I strolled down that woodsy garden path and pondered the Franciscan Tradition: "God will know us by the sign of the TAU, T, marked on our foreheads...This symbolic imagery...I reverently thought of my Secular Franciscan friends and those followers of St. Francis... and the **seal of their own commitment...a remembrance of the victory of Christ...over evil through daily self-sacrificing love.** And when I looked up to admire the surrounding countryside...there it was...a huge brown T, TAU..."OH MY"—I thought..."**this sign of contradiction— this witness of fidelity**—my Amish neighbor somehow???—had plowed a TAU IMAGE into his field—a brown TAU—A FRANCISCAN TAU IMAGE—that **witness of fidelity, until the end of all of our lives**—no wonder they were having a parade in heaven...now I could understand the natural confetti??? I stooped to pick up a pink pedal that had fallen from a nearby Crab Apple tree, and released it into the blowing breeze.



# Regional Roundup

By Sandy Neal, SFO, Regional Newsletter Editor



Deacon Wayne Padula and his wife, Alice

## **Tau Cross Region**

Wayne Padula, SFO, was ordained to the Permanent Diaconate in the Roman Catholic Church on May 22, 2004 at St. Agnes Cathedral in Rockville Centre, NY. Wayne and his wife Alice, are members of Bl. John XXIII Fraternity in St. James, Long Island, NY. A colorful TAU is on the stole, which was purchased in Assisi, and presented to Deacon Padula by his fraternity. He will serve as deacon in his own parish of St. James in Setauket, Long Island.

## **St. Francis Region**

St Louis the King Fraternity, Santa Barbara, CA celebrated their 120<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in May at the ranch of Peter and Lisa Thomas of Santa Inez. Mass was celebrated by Fr. Alberic Smith, OFM, followed by dinner on the patio. Bob Carman, SFO, Minister, gave a talk on Secular Franciscan history. On the next day, which was Sunday, fraternity members served Francis' favorite almond cakes to the parishioners of Old Mission Santa Barbara after Mass.

## **Los Tres Compañeros Region**

St. Anthony Fraternity of San Antonio, Texas celebrated their 75th Anniversary with mass at St. Anthony of Padua church on March 14, 2004. The fraternity was established in 1929, through the wonderful work of Fr. Peter Baque, from Barcelona, Spain, and Fr. John McGee, OFM. Among the many worthy works of this fraternity throughout the years are included working for the rights of the poor, providing food and clothing for the needy, sponsoring after-school tutoring, ministering to homeless men, and assisting in providing space for a free medical clinic.

## **Franciscans of the Prairie Region**

Bishop George Lucas of the Springfield Diocese consecrated Theresa Howard, SFO, as a virgin living in the world. Theresa was professed as a Secular Franciscan in January of 1997. She is a member of the Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity in Edwardsville.

The consecration of a virgin is one of the oldest sacramentals of the church and was restored, as a rite for women living in the world on May 31, 1970.

By virtue of the consecration, a virgin is responsible to pray for her diocese and clergy. She must be able to support herself financially and have her own means of providing for her own medical care. Usually consecrated virgins in the United States volunteer in their parish or diocese. Once a woman is consecrated, she is consecrated for life. Today, there are approximately 1,500 consecrated virgins in the world with about 100 living in 27 states in the United States.

## **Queen of Peace Region**

St. Anthony Fraternity, Boston, MA, celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in June.

Elizabeth (Beth) Taormina, SFO, of Blessed John XXIII Fraternity, was appointed Regional Youth/Young Adult Commission Chair.

## **'Ohana 'O Ke Anuenue Region**

Prayers of thanksgiving are offered for the life of Aida McKeen, SFO, Multicultural Committee Member, and condolences are sent to her family and the Seculars in Hawaii, who suffer her loss.

## Our Stories:

*Lord, When Did I See You Hungry? ...Thirsty?* (Mt. 25)



Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I have been asked by two of my Secular Franciscan friends to share the following with you. The first two stories I shared with them at the ACC and the third occurred the day after I returned from the ACC. May you be blessed and inspired by my telling these stories.

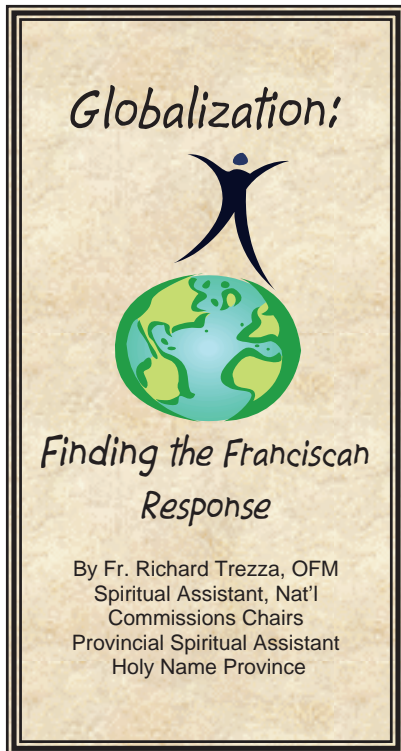
Approximately thirteen years ago my single, 29 year-old brother was hospitalized because of AIDS or an AIDS-related disease. I joined my mother in New York City to assist her at this difficult time. Steve was in a coma and the doctor advised that he was terminal. He said that Steve could die within a few days, but that he might linger because of his general good health. One of his friends called to see how Steve was doing and asked if he

could visit. Mom and I said, “Certainly, all of his friends were welcome to visit - and say their good-byes.” One friend brought us flowers to cheer us up, while in Steve’s apartment; another offered to take us home from the hospital one evening. By the grace of God Steve only lingered for a couple of days and did not need hospice care. Several of his friends did come to the hospital to visit, while we were there; one or two expressed their surprise not only at our love for Steve, but also for our acceptance of their presence and our loving concern for their loss as well. One young man shared with me that his father had “disowned” him upon discovering that he was “gay” and that he was no longer welcome in his parents’ home. He and another friend shared that those families who had accepted their homosexual child, usually did not accept their child’s homosexual friends. He explained that is why it has been so important for them to have a strong network of support persons and agencies. We planned on taking Steve home for burial and his friends said they would have a memorial service in New York City. Since we had shown our love and acceptance, they invited us to attend the memorial. Our whole family made the trip from Philadelphia back to NYC for the memorial service. Some expressed their surprise at our presence, but all expressed their gratitude. A couple even got Mom’s permission to help pack up and load Steve’s belongings to make that job easier for us.

The second incident occurred about a year ago at our annual regional gathering. Most participants were aware of my mother’s gradual mental and physical deterioration and how difficult it has been for the both of us. Late one evening, while several of us were still chatting away, one of the women asked me how Mom was doing. I proceeded to update her and the others and they offered their continued prayer support. I thanked them and said that while it was difficult, God had assured me I had begun the “grieving process” and that when her journey was completed, the separation would not be too difficult. At that point, one of the women began crying; we asked what was wrong and if we could help. She shared that her mother had died about a year before, after a long illness through in which she was her care-giver. This woman had found it difficult to accept her mother’s death and had never cried over her loss or “grieved,” until I had shared my story with them.

The most recent incident occurred the day after I returned from our ACC in Denver, CO, while I was visiting my mother in the home, where she is a resident in “maximum personal care” (a step before nursing home). Twice a week a young woman comes in to provide “music therapy” for the residents. She plays an electronic keyboard and she sings, while encouraging the residents’ participation. Since Continue on Page 24





From Wednesday, June 8<sup>th</sup> to Friday, June 11<sup>th</sup>, the campus of Siena College in Loudonville, NY was overrun with friars and their partners in the different ministries engaged in by Holy Name Province. Among those partners ... or rather, family members, were a goodly number of Secular Franciscans. They were there for a workshop on Globalization.

Globalization, even though it has been happening all around me for some time now, was a fairly unknown entity. This workshop afforded me an opportunity of getting some answers about this reality in our world. Globalization can be the beginning of global harmony, unity and peace ... all of us sharing responsibility as well as space on this planet ... not to mention interpersonal relationships. The *Pax Christi* group would say that

globalization is the “simultaneous expansion and compression of time and space.” (Interim position Paper on Globalization to Promote Dialogue) This phenomenon could also expand the rift between the “haves” and “have-nots” of our world and could exacerbate the problematic concerning peace and justice issues. Globalization could indeed be at odds with the vision of Jesus and our Catholic Social teachings.

An overview of Globalization was given by Dr. Maryann Cusimano Love with all the participants sharing, at their tables, their reactions. What an eye opener to know that I have been part of this process without even knowing. We were told to examine the labels on our clothes. *Where were they made? Assembled? By whom? For a just and fair wage? How do we, here in the United States, eat? What do we buy? Where was it grown? Who harvests the produce? At a fair wage?* Questions like those bring home the fact that we, at times, unknowingly contribute to the unfair working and living conditions of some of our brothers and sisters here on Mother Earth.

Those, like myself, who were hearing things like this for the first time were feeling somewhat frustrated at not knowing where to begin to make a change. Many people had ideas. One of my brother friars, Fr. Peter Chepaitis, OFM, posed the question, “What would happen if every ministry of Holy Name Province only brought products with the “Fair Share” label on it (at the moment coffee, tea,

cocoa and bananas)? What would happen? When those products are sold, those who harvest them get a “fair share” of the profits, which would normally go to the mega-companies.

Dr. Mary Elizabeth Ingham, CSJ, a Sister of St. Joseph, gave a Franciscan perspective to the response of the newly forming world order. Using the theology of Bl. Duns Scotus, a Franciscan theologian, she began to offer hope by delineating the challenges of Franciscan life and ministry in a globalized world. One of her handouts reflected her ideas by stating: *“As best I can, I will: 1) Strive to recognize the dignity of every person as a unique ‘portrait of Christ.’ 2) Strive to receive every person with respect. 3) Have the intention and make every effort to do good and to be loving. 4) Seek to actively participate in working to create and establish relationships in which people, not products, are given priority... power is exercised respectfully and mutually ... the common good is given due and honest consideration.”*

As Franciscans, we already possess the where-with-all to bring this about because, by membership in the Order, we have imbibed a culture, which allows us an alternative way of viewing the world; of esteeming people over things; of being able to celebrate the good things about our world. Franciscans know how to do this ... Francis and Clare taught us how and our world desperately needs our know-how. Let us be selfless in the sharing

of the wonderful gifts given us as members of the Order – the Franciscan movement is up to the challenge ... and WE are the MOVEMENT!

*Alongside the discernment of new ways to understand how we are made in the image and likeness of God – the One – there is a danger of making God in the image and likeness of our human institutions.*

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### Globalization:



#### An Ecology Issue

By Fr. Larry Bernard, OFM  
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Thomas Berry in his paradigm-setting book on ecology, The Great Work writes that "intimacy with the planet in its wonder and beauty and the full depth of its meaning is what enables an integral human relationship with the planet to function... The fulfillment of the Earth community is to be caught up in the grandeur of existence itself and in admiration of those mysterious powers whence all this has emerged."

*Questions Franciscans may ask themselves about ecology in its relation to globalization:*

1. Do I take pride in raising my own produce or do I find joy in working with local farmers and appreciating the land where they grow food organically? Do I realize most food we Americans now eat is transported thousands of miles to our markets? Do I eat Australian oranges when there are American oranges?

2. Do I know how animals are treated in the "factory farms" (e.g. Smithfield, etc.) of modern America and how their excrement is poisoning land, air and water and how they are driving small animal farmers, near and far, into bankruptcy?

3. Do I drive a vehicle that gets less than 30 miles per gallon? Am I thinking about getting a hybrid vehicle, e.g., Toyota Prius or Honda hybrid?

4. Do I take short showers? Do I realize how fresh water is in short supply world wide and how the US may take others' water?

5. Do I look for and buy Fair Trade products, that is, those products that come from producers around the world who respect the workers and the land itself?

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### Globalization:



#### A Formation Issue

By Anne H. Mulqueen, SFO  
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*Witnessing to the good yet to come and obliged to acquire purity of heart because of the vocation they have embraced, they should set themselves free to love God and their brothers and sisters. (Article XII)*

NAFRA—USA's logo shows a T (Tau) centered over a map of the United States.



This logo symbolizes only a partial image of a much greater reality, the presence of the Secular Franciscan Order in the world. Together with our brothers and sisters throughout the world, we continue to make present the charism of our Father Francis in the life and mission of Christ's church. Ideally, the soul of every Secular Franciscan bears the indelible mark of Christ's commandment to *love one another as I have loved you*. Our baptism and profession empower us to transcend artificial boundaries shaped by human hands and relate fraternally to all creation—animate and inanimate—fashioned by God's own hand.

Bearing in mind that good formation includes three ever-present, ever-interacting elements: *information, formation and transformation*, let us begin to deepen our understanding of globalization from a Christian and Franciscan spiritual foundation.

As travel time between countries shrinks and communications become

instantaneous, we can no longer plead ignorance of economic deprivation, injustice, and concerns of our *now* not so distant global neighbors. Formation, both initial and ongoing, cannot ignore these issues if we are to be faithful to what we profess in our Rule.

To begin the process of understanding the impact of globalization on us individually and on our national identity and interests, I ask you to reflect upon the following statements and questions and discuss them in your fraternity formation gatherings.

In your own words, define globalization. At this time, do you believe you have enough information to discuss globalization knowledgeably? If not, are you willing to do whatever is necessary to acquire this information? A good resource for acquiring information on globalization is <http://www.hnp.org>, the Holy Name Province website for Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation.

If you embrace *all* people—the *powerful* and the *powerless*—as equals and brothers and sisters, how will your life change? If you adopt attitudes of respect and universal kinship for *all* forms of creation, how will your life change? Are you willing to endure the discomfort, even pain, of being *reformed*, as clay is reformed in the potter's hand? Are you sufficiently discomforted by escalating global poverty and desecration of the earth to reevaluate your actual needs? What goes—what stays?

What negative attitudes and opinions toward other races, religions and nationalities do you hold that need transformation by the power of the Holy Spirit? Why is it so difficult to say “no” to the temptation to exploit creation? Why is it so difficult to surrender our prejudices and say “yes” to the Holy Spirit's promise of global harmony?

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### *Globalization:*



### *A Youth/Young Adult Issue*

By Kathy Taormina, SFO  
NAFRA Youth/Young Adult Chair  
[kltsfo@frontiernet.net](mailto:kltsfo@frontiernet.net)

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What is the world that we live in? Do we see our world, as just our own little community where we live?

What do I do with my spare time – hang around, chat on the phone, play video games, watch TV, volunteer at home around the house, volunteer some time and effort with a church group, community group? If I am old enough, do I donate blood?

Would I contemplate hanging around the house with my friends drinking *fair-trade* coffee instead of going to the local Starbucks?

As I make my many purchases, have I ever thought about where the items were made, assembled, grown, picked, shipped? Was it by

undereducated, underpaid youth/young adults from other nations? How can I find out? Do I spend my cash only on myself or do I have a charity I share with? Does my cavalier attitude towards my surroundings and my cruising around in my cars put additional burdens on our Earth?

Do I make excessive demands on my parent(s) for items of fashion and style, such as a car or gadgets at home? Does the cost of these wants/needs cause undo pressure on my parents, so both feel a necessity to work outside the home to accumulate enough income to satisfy me and keep up with my peers? Have I even given this a thought?

How can we learn about other cultures, even in our own country? Do we even want to? How can we share our Franciscan Spirit with them? Can we do this globally?

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### *Globalization:*



### *A Family Issue*

By Alina Zygmunt, SFO  
NAFRA Family Commission Member  
[Alinaz@comcast.net](mailto:Alinaz@comcast.net)

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A Secular Franciscan is considered to be "a citizen of the world." Therefore, the child suffering in Sudan becomes our "spiritual sister," and the frightened Palestinian

boy throwing rocks at the Israeli soldier becomes "our spiritual brother." How can we in our fraternities reach out to the needy children of the world and to help the poor and hurting families of other countries? Challenge yourselves to find and support worldwide Franciscan Organizations, whose very existence is to "create conditions of life worthy of people redeemed by Christ." (Article XIII)

Globalization in the areas of education, culture, and information must be made to work for all. How can the interests of the entire world be addressed without undermining the individual differences in culture and religion? In order to develop a universal framework of action, mustn't each country yield a degree of jurisdiction? How can Franciscans serve as an example to the world of the "courteous spirit that accepts all people as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ?" How can Franciscans protect the rights of individuals in the light of universal acceptance? According to UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization), 200 million of the world's children do not get a basic education. There are 800 million adult illiterates; that is, one in four of the adult population of our planet cannot read. As Franciscans, we are to be "attentive to the education and vocation of each child;" therefore, in embracing the family of the world, what can you specifically do to assist in this dire situation? (Please check out the Central Asia

Institute that launches educational initiatives in Afghanistan and Pakistan. [www.ikat.org](http://www.ikat.org) and [cai@ikat.org](mailto:cai@ikat.org))

How can your fraternity "cultivate a spirit of prayer, fidelity, and respect for life" within the world at large? Create a forum for discussion in your own local fraternity that will encourage the development of an action plan to "globalize" the perspective of your members. Read about other cultures and religions to gain a better understanding of our fellow inhabitants on Planet Earth. Seek to adopt a Fraternity in a foreign country to learn about how others live. Study prayers from other cultures, and write a fraternity prayer (or prayer service) for global harmony and love. Expand the spiritual boundaries of your members, so that they will truly extend their mission of respect and value to all families of the world.

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## Globalization:



### A Work Issue

By Pauline Cahalan, SFO  
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The NAFRA Work Commission understands that its primary focus is to help SFOs and others come to the attitudinal realization that work is "a gift." As I've written

before, this is a very counter-cultural idea in U.S. society, where most people see work as something they have to do so they have money to pay for basic necessities and, hopefully, to have some left over for recreation. As I ponder the points Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM, writes about in his summary of the Holy Name Province conference on globalization, the following questions, involving attitude, come to mind. I'm sure you will think of others as you discuss this topic with folks in your life.

1. As an SFO, what should my attitude be within my place of work, whether it be my home, a factory, a farm, a volunteer opportunity, a place of business?

2. As an SFO, how do my actions and conversations reflect my attitude about my contributions to the business of furthering God's creation and reflecting Christ to others?

3. When I put on clothes or eat food, do I think about and pray for those whose toil made these things available to me?

4. How wide is my concept of who is included in the Mystical Body of Christ? Do I think about all of humanity as part of this Mystical Body or is it just those in my immediate circle: all Catholics, all Americans?

Thinking about our society:

1. What is the attitude of employers toward employees? Are they seen as assets or liabilities to the company or workplace?

2. What attitude is reflected in employers' decisions to seek out countries without



environmental regulations and labor laws that protect workers, when establishing their operations in countries other than the U.S.? What kind of working conditions do the employees of the overseas sites deserve if they are part of the Mystical Body?

3. Can people working 40 hours per week for the minimum wage of \$5.15/hr. in the U.S., usually without any benefits, ever hope to get out of poverty?

4. Do I, as a citizen of the U.S., have any ways I can try to influence the attitude of corporate managements?

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## Globalization:



### A Peace & Justice Issue

By Carolyn Colburn, SFO  
NAFRA Peace & Justice Chair  
[colburn@sonic.net](mailto:colburn@sonic.net)

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A Franciscan response to globalization needs to be discussed in our fraternities and regions. The following questions for reflection are written from the point of view of the Peace and Justice Commission.

1. Some poor countries have benefited from the rapid advances in communication and exchange of money that are part of the globalization process. Other poor countries are worse off than they were before. What should be a Franciscan response to this fact? Can we

ask that the rich countries enact policies that will be of economic benefit to the poor countries, but lower the standard of living for some persons in the rich countries? Are we asking something that is Franciscan and Christian? Are we asking something that is unfair?

2. When jobs are sent to low wage countries, the owners increase their profit. Should the government require that some portion of the increased profit be used to assist the displaced workers? Would this be unreasonable interference with the free market? What is a Franciscan and Christian understanding of the relationship between workers and owners?

3. Can we be in relationship with the hands that made our clothes and harvested our food? Do we know enough about fair trade products? How can we find out about sweatshop free products? How can we let corporations know that we care more about human lives than cheaper prices?

4. We work for change with the witness of our lives. Has what I know about globalization changed the way I behave toward the people that I meet each day?

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### Quote:

I have learned silence from the talkative, toleration from the intolerant, and kindness from the unkind; yet strange, I am ungrateful to those teachers.

Kahlil Gibran 1883-1931

## Franciscan Unity

By Marcella Bina, SFO  
Ecumenical Committee Chairperson  
[Marcella\\_b@core.com](mailto:Marcella_b@core.com)

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Although the Ecumenical Committee has been able to locate only two non-Roman Catholic associations inspired by St. Francis, within the United States, the committee continues to search for others. In the meantime, the three Franciscan associations, which include the Secular Franciscan Order, SFO, The Third Order Society of St. Francis, TSSF (TAU-USA Spring 2004), and the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans, OEF (TAU-USA Summer 2004), have formed a shared relationship called *the Joint Committee on Franciscan Unity*.

This new joint committee has made preparations to function with equal representation from each participating order by sharing responsibilities and costs. Also, plans have been made to have six members on this initial committee: two representatives from each order, with each representative serving a three year term. The initial appointments for representatives were planned to be staggered such that one representative would have a two year term and the other have a three year term. Additional plans were made to hold a minimum of one meeting per year and to submit an annual report to the sponsoring orders.

Members of the joint committee are: Fred Ball, OEF, Anne Nancy Vosler, OEF, Fr. Masud Syedullah, TSSF, Diana Finch, TSSF, Marcella A. Bina, SFO, and Jean D’Onofrio, SFO. They have received approval from each of their sponsoring orders to proceed with this joint committee.

The committee held its first meeting in February 2004, at St. Mary’s Retreat House in Santa Barbara, CA. In addition to the six appointed members, a guest, Fr. Paul Ojibway, SA, resource person, was invited to facilitate this meeting.

A “Mission Statement” was proposed and accepted by consensus; organizing principles were developed; shared responsibilities in the spirit of an egalitarian relationship were agreed upon; responsive dialogue between the joint committee and its sponsors was acknowledged; the joint committee is to function as a *model* of unity; the need to be a ministry of reconciliation was proposed; and finally, a three year meeting plan was projected along with task assignments.

The next meet will take place in August 2005. We are most eager for the bonds of unity to increase among *all our Franciscan brothers and sisters*.



## From St. Francis with Love...

These writings of St. Francis were presented in a talk by Fr. Chris Dietz, OFM, Conv., Minister Provincial of Cupertino Province, Fraternity Spiritual Assistant, St. Anthony of Padua Fraternity, Pismo Beach, CA

### Prayer

Almighty, eternal, just and merciful God,  
give us miserable ones  
the grace to do for You alone  
what we know you want us to do  
and always to desire what  
pleases You.

Inwardly cleaned,  
interiorly enlightened  
and inflamed by the fire of the  
Holy Spirit,  
may we be able to follow  
in the footprints of your beloved  
Son,

Our Lord Jesus Christ,  
and, by Your grace alone,  
may we make our way to You,  
Most High,

Who live and rule in perfect  
Trinity and simple Unity,  
and are glorified  
God almighty,  
forever and ever.  
Amen.

### **What is the one most Important Thing?**

Saint Francis states that it is having the workings of the Holy Spirit in us. "...let them pay attention to what they must desire above all else: **to have the Spirit of the Lord and Its holy activity...** "

Chapter X, The Admonition and Correction of the Brothers)\*

(Prayer-b page 120)\*

\* Francis of Assisi-The Saint

Vol. I-Early Documents

Edited by Regis J. Armstrong, OFM Cap., J. A. Wayne Hellmann, OFM, Conv. and William J. Short, OFM

## An SFO Neighborhood Idea from Dayton, Ohio

By Curtis Kneblak  
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[ckneblak@catholiccincinnati.org](mailto:ckneblak@catholiccincinnati.org)

My wife and I are in formation with the St. Leonard Fraternity, Centerville, Ohio. We have been sensing a call to live a more simple life in the spirit of St. Francis within the city of Dayton. When we moved here, we chose a relatively poor neighborhood. In our house, we decided to make one of the rooms in our house a chapel, and have begun formalize a life of prayer, hospitality, and service to our neighbors.

When some houses went up for sale in our neighborhood, we started thinking about how great it would be to have other Seculars with us. Our vision would be to establish a sense of community, occasionally praying and eating together, serving one another, and most especially serving the needs of the neighborhood, and being witnesses to the Gospel.



# Secular Franciscan Life Today <sup>1</sup>

By F. Javier Orozco, SFO

***Most High,  
glorious God <sup>2</sup>,  
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.***

## Introduction:

Why begin such vast topic on our Secular Franciscan life with a prayer? My own sense is that today, more than ever, we—who call ourselves Secular Franciscans—need to acknowledge how much of our Christian identity and secularity is precisely a contemplative vocation. Our vocation as Secular Franciscans already demands that we maintain a fixed eye on the Cross: prayer certainly is an essential method that helps us to remain faithful to our Gospel life. There is also a more practical reason. The prayer cited above provides a proper framework for what I want to say about our topics: four images or orientations of what I think a Secular Franciscan life should be about. Rather than to give a historical perspective, proper, I want to give more of a personal, spiritual perspective. While these four images that I will be using are separated in my presentation, like in the prayer itself they make up the whole. Let us then explore more closely these four orientations.

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<sup>1</sup> This paper was presented at a Chapter of Ministers for the Mother Cabrini Region of The Secular Franciscan Order held on Saturday May 15, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents; Volume I: The Saint*. Edited by Regis J. Armstrong, OFM Cap., J.A. Wayne Hellmann, OFM Conv., William J. Short, OFM. New City Press, 1999.

## Image One: “Most High, glorious God”

Two things strike me about this opening line: first, there is an explicit affirmation of God who is “High” and “Glorious;” second, and this is implicit, there is a theology, a way of relating to God, a way of being with God; there is a hidden spirituality. What is this theology or spirituality? Well, that God is “high” and that God is understood as “glorious.” But note the emphasis of the word “most:” It is not enough that God is high and glorious, but God is “Most” high and glorious. My natural quest here is then to ask: “most” in relationship to what? Since, “most” is a comparative term, my own intuition tells me that the “most” here can be in reference to “all of creation.” This is comprehensible to all of us who have come to understand Br. Francis as a friend of creation and, most importantly, a Francis who is “part of creation.” In these opening lines, we already see how a Secular Franciscan Life is a “particular call to be in creation” or better yet, to be in proper relation to all of Creation: where God has a privileged place, so to speak.

With Br. Francis, we Secular Franciscans find our “proper place,” as it were. What do I mean by proper place? Like in the opening lines of the prayer, we are *deeply aware* of our creatueliness; that is to say, there is a profound call or spirituality of humility in our way of being Franciscans today: we are not the most high and glorious, although we are high and glorious by grace. I think Br. Francis understood this best, when towards the end of his life, he praised all of creation in his *Canticle of the Sun*. Hence, the spirituality we are called to live is not a “self deprecating” one, rather, it is a spirituality that dances with the beauty of life, a Franciscan life that celebrates and rejoices in our creation, precisely and insofar as we are part of it. This spiritual attitude or value has manifested for us as Franciscans throughout our secular history: as Secular Franciscans we have always been called to live a life in close connection to our Eco-sphere—long before ecology was trendy or popular, Franciscans were already seeking to honor and praise all creation. Today, more than ever, the opening lines of this Franciscan prayer, “Most High, glorious God” already reminds or

should remind us of our commitment to honor not just God, but to honor God precisely in relationship to creation.

More importantly, for us Secular Franciscans, by virtue of our secular status, we have an added reminder that we stand for the “secular” (*secularis*), that is to say, for the “worldly” or stated differently, for the “creation.” Our secular status places us right in the middle of creation. As “*secularis*,” we have no privileged place other than being in the world. And for us Franciscans, today, this being in the world means that we remain humble and grateful. Humble enough to recognize God as the ‘Most’ high and glorious, and grateful enough for our creaturely status as the *Imago Dei*. So when we pray the words, “Most High and glorious God” we are not just affirming a distant, transcendent God, but a most intimate God who already claims me and invites me to a particular friendship that involves all that is.

**For Image Two: See the next issue. ~~~**



**By Fred McCarthy, SFO, Cartoonist**

## Connection, Relatedness

*“Everything that is in the heavens, and on earth,  
and under the earth is penetrated with the  
connectedness, penetrated with relatedness.”*  
Hildegard of Bingen.

Elizabeth Berg, in her novel *The Art of Mending* (Random House, New York – 2004) shares the thoughts of her main character, Laura Bartone regarding this inherent human need to connect. She writes: “In the coffee shop of the bookstore, two women about my age sat at a table next to me. ‘I think its hormones,’ one of them said. ‘I’m just feeling so emotional. On the way here, I saw a blind man trying to cross the street. I wanted to help, but I didn’t want to offend him if he didn’t need me. So I just watched him for a while. He was listening to the traffic so carefully, his head cocked, and—anyway, finally I just took his arm and said, ‘It’s okay to cross now,’ and he smiled at me—this radiant smile—and it made me feel like bawling. I don’t know why.’

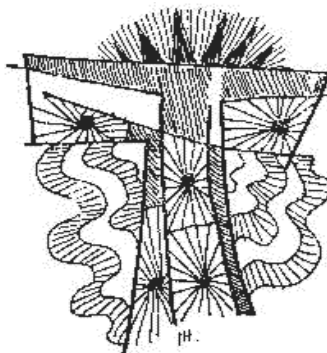
It *is* hormones,’ her friend said. ‘I have days like that, when my skin feels peeled back, when I feel completely exposed. And on those days, I cry over everything, Hallmark commercials, dropping a dish ... it’s those damn hormones.’

But I wondered if it wasn’t something else. Maybe it was the tender irony of the way that we, blind ourselves, offer our arm to others, hoping to ease the crossing. Maybe it was the odd surges of love one can feel for an absolute stranger. Or maybe it was the way we give so little when it’s in us always to give so much more. Thomas Merton wrote about feeling a sudden awareness of a profound connection to others, understanding that “they were mine and I theirs.” I always loved reading things like that, things that pointed to our oneness and, by extension, our responsibility to others. It’s the execution of anything specific that’s the problem. It’s kneeling down to meet the eyes of someone slouched on a sidewalk that you’d so much rather walk past. It’s bothering to listen with an open heart to someone who smells bad. It’s hard.”



## *Jubilee!*

*A Special Time-  
or  
A Way of Life  
for  
The SFO?*



Contributed by Terri Leone,  
SFO

*Traditionally*, a Jubilee or “holy year,” is a time of favor - a reminder that we live and work in a time of special grace. In 1998, the US bishops wrote a reflection paper entitled, “*Everyday Christianity: To Hunger and Thirst for Justice*” [1] as a preparation for the Jubilee Year 2000. Towards the end of it, they shared the following information regarding *Jubilee*. According to Jewish tradition, “the jubilee was an ideal, a reminder that Yahweh, the creator of all, was the true owner of creation and that those who live in a covenant relationship with Yahweh must also seek right

and just relationships with all people. The pious Israelite knew that the land was a gift from God. The land and all it signified -- work, material goods, financial security, the practices of economic and everyday life -- were to be understood within the context of one's relationship with God. All gifts of creation, including personal talents and abilities, first of all belong to God. The devout Israelite was a steward of God's goods. Natural resources and human talents were to serve all, with a particular concern for the poor and weak.

The *year of the Lord's favor* was a time to proclaim "liberty in the land for all," (Lev. 25:10) to "bring good news to the poor," and "let the oppressed go free." (Is. 61) It was a time to restore freedom and justice among people, to reestablish relationships of equality, remedy the conditions that kept people oppressed (Is.61), and to cancel debts (Deut. 15). The jubilee was intended to relieve the burdens of the weak and give people an opportunity to start anew. There was a clear social message in the jubilee. The jubilee year was an invitation for people to see their lives from a divine perspective: all that they were and all they did should be in accord with God's will for building a community of justice, mercy, love and peace.”

Do these exhortations and sentiments sound familiar? Do you recall our *Rule* calling us to practice the same things? Because humans are weak and

prone to “doing their own thing,” God told the Israelites they needed to celebrate a year of *Jubilee* once every 50 years to “set things right” according to God’s Plan. Holy Mother Church generally has us celebrate a year of *Jubilee* once every 25 years “to set things right” - to get us back on the right track of doing things God’s way and, to provide us with special opportunities to gain additional graces/spiritual help to do this. Doesn’t our vocation and profession as Secular Franciscans (actually all Franciscans), provide us with “a time of favor or special grace” and call us to *live the Gospel/“right relationship” everyday?* We are called to deep personal relationship or “covenant” with God. We are expected (and receive the necessary graces through our profession) to live in “right relationship” with and to promote dignity and respect for all people and for all of creation. We are called to do these things not only for ourselves but to act as “salt” and “leaven” to draw others into committing to a similar way of living - to join us in promoting justice and peace in our families and all the “communities” of which we are a part (our families, our neighborhoods, our cities, our states, our country, etc.) Perhaps another way of saying this, is that we are called to be *Jubilee People*.

[1] This document may be found on the web at <http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/projects/everyday.htm>



On the feast of Corpus Christ, Pope John Paul II announced a "**Year of the Eucharist**" that the Catholic Church will observe from October 2004 to October 2005.

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Ongoing Formation for Secular Franciscans  
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Francis of Assisi-The Saint Early Documents  
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Volume III The Prophet Edited by Regis Armstrong, OFM, Cap., J. A. Wayne Hellmann, OFM, Conv., William J Short, OFM.  
Published by New City Press  
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- 1). **Fr. Trezza's Keynote-** Friday, June 18<sup>th</sup>
- 2). **Ream's Keynote-** Saturday, June 19<sup>th</sup>
- 3). **Mazotti's Keynote-** Sunday, June 20<sup>th</sup>

# Instrument of Peace

By Julia Pearson, SFO, Human Interest Editor

A saying attributed to St. Francis of Assisi goes like this: "Teach the Gospel always; if necessary use words." Diane Halal's faith and Franciscan spirit need no words, as the gospel life and her daily routine flow as one. Two hours of her mornings are happily filled with providing transportation for folks to have breakfast and attend 8:30 mass. She doesn't describe these folks as "elderly," "shut-ins," or "poor." With a laugh, Diane says, "We're friends now!" Often the transportation includes other errands needed by her friends, such as shopping and doctor's appointments.

Besides providing transportation and/or visitation needs, Diane fills her days gathering clothing, toys, and food, etc. for the following organizations: Loaves and Fishes, Catholic Worker, Franciscan Family Apostolate, and Our Lady of Lourdes Church. She is currently the President of the St. Vincent De Paul Society in St. Hedwig's parish, Las Alamitos, California. She also serves as a lector and takes Holy Eucharist to those who are infirm and homebound. She is the current treasurer the Orange Diocese Council of Catholic Women. Active in Right to Life, she writes pro-life letters to government officials.

As a Secular Franciscan, her faith is evident in community service, as well. Ten years ago, Diane was a founder of WE CARE, and continues to be a guiding force as a volunteer trainer and worker. This organization focuses on ecumenical outreach to the poor, serving more than 10,000 last year. Diane prepares Disaster Service classes for the American Red Cross.

Literally investing body, as well as soul to her neighbors, Diane donates blood and platelets to the Red Cross. She is also a clinical trial volunteer at the University of Southern California. She has taken the necessary steps with the Genesis Program to ensure that upon her earthly death, her body will be donated to science.

In the past, Diane started a uniform exchange program and taught Physical Education, Swimming and Math Lab at St. Hedwig School. She was a water safety instructor for the American Red Cross program that provided free swimming lessons for babies, Scouts, the Coast Guard, and others. She has been a leader at all levels, for both Girl and Boy Scouts. She was also a project leader for 4-H. Other service was given to the School Attendance Review Board, meeting and counseling with offenders. Through the Corazon organization, Diane made six trips to Mexico for the purpose of helping the poor. She gave promotional talks and collected food and clothing for these trips. With a Masters degrees in Education/Gerontology, Diane donated assistance to fraud victims from 2000-2002. In 2000, she chaperoned 120 teenagers through eight European countries for Spirit of America.

The Halal hearth and heart are warmed by the love of her seven children: Kathy, Bob, Steve, Bill, Jenny, Mary, and Laura, plus eleven grandchildren.

Diane firmly believes that being a professed Secular Franciscan for nearly fifty years is the thread that pulls everything together - her faith, family, parish activities, and community service. Her family and SFO family, the St. Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity, were beaming when Diane was honored by the Diocese of Orange, as the Catholic Woman of the Year for 2004. South of Los Angeles, the Diocese of Orange, mirrors the County of Orange, and has 300,000 people. Diane claims the Peace Prayer of St. Francis, as a guiding devotion in her life. You can hear the smile, as she says, "Peace, love, and prayers: *say it all.*"

*"Peace, love, and prayers: say it all."*

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## T The SFO Archives

By Sharon Deveaux, SFO  
National Archivist

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As the new Archivist, I am very happy to be working on the Archives for all of you. Currently it is small, but I can assure you that it will grow into a comprehensive, professional and enjoyable historical asset. My first task has been to prepare the Archives Mission Statement.

The Regional Secretaries have been given a list of specific materials that are of archival importance that we would like to have in the Archives. Everyone's efforts would be greatly appreciated in identifying and sending them to me. Please e-mail me for mailing instructions at [sharonx@earthlink.net](mailto:sharonx@earthlink.net) Also I have plans for expanding the scope of the Archives, so be prepared for some new ideas! All questions, comments, suggestions, ideas, opinions, advice, insights and even archives jokes are welcome ☺. Please e-mail them to me and use "SFO Archives" as the subject.

## One-0-Seven, and Gone to Heaven



Sr. Manuela Dieringer, OSF,

Sr Manuela Dieringer, OSF, left this world on May 29, 2004. She was born Agnes Josephine Dieringer in 1896, on the feast the Transitus. Agnes entered the religious Order of the Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity in Stella Niagara, N.Y. in 1912; she answered the call by way of a donkey ride to a convent in her hometown of Toledo, Washington. She was met there by Sr. Imelda, who told her she was returning to Buffalo the following Sunday. Agnes quickly responded, "I'm going with you", and she did. A year later, two of her sisters followed her. She professed her vows in 1917. She tells that she had never heard of the name Manuela until the Bishop said, "your religious name will be Mary Manuela." Her sisters were given the names, Epiphania and Noella. The three then became known as "the Christmas Sisters." In an interview for The Way of St. Francis publication, two questions were posed to Sr. Manuela. The first, "What is the most significant event in your life?" She answered: "Pronouncing publicly my vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, making me a Franciscan for life." The second question was "What advice would you give to people today?" She responded, "Love God and, like Francis, cherish and revere all God's wondrous creation. In times of stress and worry, remember, God will provide. His will is our peace."

For Sr. Manuela,  
God provided in abundance.



## A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY

You are cordially invited to submit, for publication in TAU-USA, confirmable recollections, or quotes from publications, relating to the history of our Order.

This particular article is excerpted from Franciscan History – The Three Orders of St. Francis of Assisi by Fr. Lazaro Iriate, OFM Cap, translated by Patricia Ross; Publisher Franciscan Herald Press.

Chapter XV of the Third Order Constitutions, which were solemnly sanctioned by Pope Innocent XI in 1689, presents the job descriptions of the various officers of the Third Order fraternities. Here are quoted excerpts from the Franciscan History.

“(1) The spiritual director is called ‘visitor’ in these constitutions. They call attention to the importance of his position in these words: ‘In the Third Order, the most important role, as far as the maintenance of its fervor and still more important promotion of its development is concerned, rests upon him who holds the office of visitor. For it is his official duty to instruct, to encourage, to guard, to reprimand those who hold responsible positions as well as members, so that the all may worthily fulfill their duties and obligations.’

(2) The *prefect* is called ‘minister.’ After the ‘visitor,’ say these constitutions, comes the minister, whom all the brethren must respect as their superior father. They add that the ‘minister’ may have a ‘coadjutor,’ that is, a vice-prefect.

(3) The *vice-prefect* should be a priest if the prefect is a layman, and a layman if the prefect is a priest. This implies that both priest and lay people could hold office in the fraternity. The term of office was for one year, but it could be extended if the

incumbent showed he had the requisite qualifications.

(4) The *secretary* had the care of the register of investitures and professions; kept the papers pertaining to the properties of the fraternity; recorded the deliberations of the meetings of both the council and the fraternity; made known to those concerned the decisions of the council; kept in a safe place the seal of the fraternity.

(5) The *councilors*, who are called ‘discreets,’ were to be from six to eight in number according to the size of the fraternity.

(6) The *promoters*, who are called ‘zelators,’ kept an eye on the manner in which the members observed the Rule and safeguarded the observance of the Rule in case there were serious and public transgressions.

(7) The *treasurer*, called ‘syndic,’ received alms and gifts and dispensed them as current needs required. It is expressly stated that he had to be a professed tertiary.

(8) The *sacristan*, called ‘vicar of divine worship,’ had charge of the fraternity’s chapel or altar and everything pertaining to it; vestments, sacred vessels, decorations of the altar. If necessary, he could have specially assigned assistants.

(9) The *infirmarian* was to be a priest if possible, apparently a tertiary priest who belonged to the fraternity, or at least a professed brother from among the older members. It was his duty to visit the sick brethren, and give them care and counsel according to their material and spiritual needs. In large cities, he was helped by four to six assistant infirmarians, to each of whom a section of the area in which there were members of the fraternity was assigned as his particular field of action.”

*Compare these positions with today’s fraternity positions.*

## LIVING BY FAITH

A letter for the ill, the aged, the shut-in, and the handicapped

Published by the National Family Commission SFO, USA

"You don't light a lamp only to hide it in the cellar or to put it under a bucket. You put it on a stand where people see it when they come in. The lamp of your body is your eye. If your eye is sound, the whole body is filled with light. But if your eye is diseased, your body is filled with darkness. See to it then that the light in you doesn't fade into darkness. If your whole body is full of light, however, with no darkness in it, it will be completely lit—the way it is when the light of a lantern shines on you." Luke 11:33-36

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Sonia asked me if I would write to you this month, so I thought I would share an experience that I had at a speaking engagement at a Senior Citizens Center in the city where I worked not too long ago. Some of the members of the Center attend a weekly Bible study on Monday mornings, and they invite a different member of the Christian faith community to lead their discussion each week. For my part, I wanted to introduce them to *Lectio Divina*, a contemplative way of praying the Scriptures, which I enjoy.

The group leader asked if anyone was in need of prayer. He then said a prayer for all the intentions mentioned by the members. This was followed by one member playing the organ and those in attendance singing hymns. The organist, who has been a member of this group for many years, is blind. After the singing the meeting was turned over to me.

I explained that *Lectio Divina* is a very ancient art of praying the scriptures that is one of the treasures of Benedictine monastics. I explained the process and what we would be doing. I used the reading from the Gospel of Luke, which is found above this letter.

*Lectio Divina* was a new way of looking at scripture for this group, and it stimulated much

discussion. We were all amazed at the remarks made by the organist, who was blind. She told us that this passage was not referring to our physical eye, but to our spiritual eye. She told us that her spiritual eye was good. This was obvious, as she was full of light and life. She had never talked about her disability with this group before. I chose this particular scripture passage at random, but it is one of my favorites. I did not know beforehand that anyone at the meeting would be blind, but I thank God that this scripture opened a door for her to share her spiritual wisdom with us. She proceeded to tell us how she "sees" through music, touch, and hearing. Her sharing made me think of you. Regardless of the disability or limitations in our lives, our spiritual body can be healthy and full of vitality and joy!

In the last letter, Sonia wrote to us about joy. The joy of being free and the need to learn the joy of doing nothing, realizing that God is at work in us. Remember Sisters and Brothers, regardless of our limitations, we are more than our physical bodies—we are children of God! As such, we have a spiritual body still capable of letting light into the world. With God at work in us, may we find new ways to shine!

*Be praised my Lord  
for all your creation  
serving you joyfully!*

St. Francis (Canticle of Creation)

### LET US PRAY

Liberating God, let what you began in us come to fulfillment at the day of Jesus Christ. Let us exult in the good news that we are accepted and approved by Your love, not by our work. Amen.

I Never Found That Rocking Chair by Richard Morgan

Peace and good!  
Ed Horvat, SFO, Chaplain  
Monongalia General Hospital  
Morgantown, West Virginia



### *Lighter Side of Life!*

Ken Beattie, SFO, Humor Page Editor

☺ The math teacher saw that little Johnny wasn't paying attention in class. She called on him and said, "Johnny! What are 4, 2, 28 and 44?" Little Johnny quickly replied, "NBC, CBS, HBO, and the Cartoon Network!"

☺ When I stopped the bus to pick up Chris for preschool, I noticed an older woman hugging him as he left the house. "Is that your grandmother?" I asked. "Yes," Chris said. "She's come to visit us for Christmas." "How nice," I said. "Where does she live?" "At the airport," Chris replied. "Whenever we want her, we just go out there and get her."

☺ I didn't know if my granddaughter had learned her colors yet, so I decided to test her. I would point out something and ask what color it was. She would tell me and always she was correct. But it was fun for me, so I continued. At last, she headed for the door, saying sagely, "Grandma, I think you should try to figure out some of these yourself!"

☺ When the mother returned from the grocery store, her small son pulled out the box of animal crackers he had begged for, then he spread the animal-shaped crackers all over the kitchen counter. "What are you doing?" his Mom asked. "The box says you can't eat them if the seal is broken," the boy explained. "I'm looking for the seal."

☺ Her 7-year-old grandson surprised this little grandmother one morning. He had made her coffee. She drank what was the worst cup of coffee in her life. When she got to the bottom, there were three of those little green army men in the cup. She said, "Honey, what are these army men doing in my coffee?" Her grandson said, "Grandma, it says on TV 'The best part of waking up is soldiers in your cup!'"

☺ In the supermarket was a man pushing a cart that contained a screaming, bellowing baby. The gentleman kept repeating softly, "Don't get excited, Albert; don't scream, Albert; don't yell, Albert; keep

calm, Albert." A woman standing next to him said, "You certainly are to be commended for trying to soothe your son, Albert." The man looked at her and said, "Lady, I'm Albert."

☺ A three-year-old boy went with his dad to see a new litter of kittens. On returning home, he breathlessly informed his mother, "There were two boy kittens and two girl kittens." "How did you know that?" his mother asked. "Daddy picked them up and looked underneath," he replied. "I think it's printed on the bottom."

☺ While working for an organization that delivers lunches to elderly shut-ins, I used to take my four-year-old daughter on my afternoon rounds. The various appliances of old age unfailingly intrigued her, particularly the canes, walkers and wheelchairs. One day I found her staring at a pair of false teeth soaking in a glass. As I braced myself for the inevitable barrage of questions, she merely turned and whispered, "The tooth fairy will never believe this!"

☺ While walking along the sidewalk in front of his church, a minister heard the intoning of a prayer that nearly made his collar wilt. Apparently, his five-year-old son and his playmates had found a dead robin. Feeling that proper burial should be performed, they had secured a small box and cotton batting, then dug a hole and made ready for the disposal of the deceased. The minister's son was chosen to say the appropriate prayers and with sonorous dignity intoned his version of what he thought his father always said: "Glory be unto the Faaather. And to the Soonnn ...and into the hole he gooooes."

☺ A little girl had just finished her first week of school. "I'm just wasting my time," she said to her mother. "I can't read, I can't write, and they won't let me talk!"

#### SIGN OF THE TIMES:

☺ Today, was John's wife birthday...and when he arrived home from work, his wife demanded that he take her out to some place expensive...so John took her to the gas station...

☺ Ain't it the truth?...Old age would be slowed considerably, if it had to work its way through Congress.



**XX WORLD YOUTH DAY  
in COLOGNE, GERMANY  
AUGUST 16-21, 2005  
YOUFRA August 12-15, 2005**

*“We have come to worship Him”  
Mt. 2:2*

The SFO in the USA has sent a delegation to the Franciscan World Youth Day meetings during the International World Youth Day celebrations for the past 3 meetings; Paris, France in 1997, Rome, Italy in 2000 and Toronto, Canada in 2002.

These gatherings have been of great benefit to the YYA Commission and the International Franciscan Youth alike. We have met with, discussed and shared the trials and successes of our Franciscan youth ministries in the countries that span the globe. We have sung songs, prayed the psalms and celebrated the Liturgy together as one group of Franciscan Youth with many faces and languages. It has always been a blessed time for the youth and the adults who journey with them.

In August of 2005, in Cologne, Germany, the Catholic youth of the world will once again meet with the Holy Father and celebrate their Catholicism, their faith in God and their youth! The Franciscan SFO in Germany will host the next Franciscan World Youth Day delegate meetings which the USA has been invited to attend.

Past problems with travel arrangements, costs and follow-up activities have led the National Youth/Young Adults Commission to develop a new and exciting way to offer the opportunity to attend the Franciscan WYD delegate meetings with the YYA Commission Chair to three Franciscan youth or young adults in the USA.

A grant of \$1,500.00 from the SFO Donor Fund will award three \$500.00 scholarships. In this way, three youths will have this exciting opportunity. The YYA Chair will concentrate on preparing the three youth, via email, mail and telephone, for what they will experience during the delegate meetings with the other Franciscan youths. The YYA Chair and the three Franciscan youth will comprise the four delegates permitted to be sent from each country.

The three scholarships will be given to youth who are already planning to travel with their respective parish or diocesan groups where they reside. In this way, they have the support and encouragement of their hometown and can attend meetings and liturgies at home. The scholarship will defray their costs, but the work they will still have to do will make them appreciate the journey and give them a chance to learn and grow in their faith along the way.

**The following are the requirements to apply for the three National SFO Scholarships:**

- Youth or Young Adult must be between the ages of 16-30 by August 12, 2005 (USA Bishops' regulations)
  - Youth or Young Adult must be an active member, or in formation, of a Franciscan Youth Group or in a SFO Fraternity.
  - Youth must send in a personal resume, including Franciscan youth activities and personal interests and hobbies.
  - A referral letter from the adult SFO in charge of the group, or formation, will be needed to verify the status of the youth.
  - Youth must write an essay (300 min. - 500 max. words) on “How Is the Franciscan Charism Manifested in My Life?”
  - The essays must be devoid of all personal references or names to keep them truly anonymous. The essays will become the property of the SFO~USA.
  - Youth must agree to be in contact every month with the YYA Chair (either by email, mail or telephone) for instructions, preparations and formation for WYD 2005.
  - Youth is responsible for arriving to all the Franciscan World Youth Day delegates meetings or gatherings on time and well prepared. The YYA Chair will provide all information necessary to make this possible.
- Youfra meetings are August 12-15, 2005.**
- Youth will be responsible for one follow-up article about their experiences by September 30, 2005, and said article will become the property of the SFO~USA.
  - Applications must be postmarked by November 30, 2004. No exceptions!
  - **Mail to:** Kathy Taormina, SFO, YYA Chair 920 Whitney Dr., Apple Valley, MN 55124

**The three National SFO Scholarships will be awarded by the following:**

- The essays will be devoid of all personal references, numbered, copied and sent to the SFO Executive Council members to read, rate and vote on the top five. The Y/YA Chair will be excused from voting. The top three essays, which receive the most points, will be our awardees.
- The three scholarships will be awarded by January 15, 2005.
- Preparation of the youths will then begin, led by the National YYA Chair.
- Franciscan T-shirts for two days will be provided.



**Our Stories** continued:

Mom has difficulty finding her way to the room where Carol plays, I try to be there and take her. On Monday, after almost everyone else had left the room at the end of the session, Helen, a wheelchair bound person, called to me, as Mom and I were leaving the room. She said she wanted to talk to me for a minute. I hesitated because I knew Mom wanted to get to her room and she has said that Helen makes her uncomfortable - I think this is because of her loud voice when, she does speak. Also from my experience, Helen rarely speaks and even more rarely can she put more than a few words together rationally. I didn't want to get caught in a conversation that she thought was rational and I thought was gibberish. She asked me again and said she would only keep me a minute. I went over to her and asked what I could do for her. She reached out her hands, as she is wont to do and held mine so tenderly, looked me in the eyes and said she wanted to thank me and my "friend over there" for coming. She said the sessions were so much more lovely, when we attended and that she hoped we would come back again. Knowing that most people like to hear their name, I tried to use hers several times in the conversation, when I thanked her for saying those nice things. She asked my name and I gave it and introduced my mother. She looked at both of us closely and repeated our names. She touched her forehead and said she would pray for us and

would try to remember our names. She asked again if we would come back again and then said "God bless you." This conversation, which was grateful, rational & soft-spoken, touched me very deeply!

I had assumed it was dementia causing her to be incommunicative or very loud, when she did try to communicate. I also thought it caused her to be inattentive to her surroundings—I never dreamed she was aware of our presence at these music sessions.

I know music "touches the soul" and is important for most people's well being. Now I know that these sessions can also make persons more aware of their surroundings as well , even if it doesn't show, to those around them.

There are times when we are quite aware that we are ministering to the "hungry Christ" or the "thirsty Christ"—like when we are caring for sick family members—but there are times when we are minister to the "hungry" or "thirsty" Christ without our realizing it—like when we allowed my brother's homosexual friends to share our grief; by being vulnerable and sharing our pain with others, or by my presence with my mother at the music sessions (of course, I need not mention that I greeted the other participants with a smile & a few kind words while arriving and leaving). Other times we unknowingly minister to others by "sharing our story"—by acknowledging the power of God's grace and/or the loving support of sisters and brothers. May God bless you; may He

strengthen you in "turning up your flame" and may He give you His Peace and Joy always.

Love and prayers from your little sister, Terri Leone, SFO St. Francis Fraternity, Phila. St. Katharine Drexel Region

~~~

*The Hiddenness of God  
is in everything,  
every day!*

By Tom McMahan, SFO  
San Damiano Fraternity  
Loveland, Colorado

*He's in the still hour of darkness  
before the warm sun  
brightens the day.  
He's in the glistening dew  
that covers all green life.  
as dawn awakens.  
He's in the fresh clean air  
that greets your lungs with a  
blossom fragrance.  
He's in the first flight of birds  
scampering to feast on spilt seed.  
He's in the first prayers  
offered in the morning,  
in coffee brew  
and toasted wheat bread.  
He's in the very day that  
opens you up  
by breathing you in  
and breathing you out.  
He's in that first person you meet  
and that last act of the day,  
in everything you take in and  
everything you give away.  
He rises with you in the morning  
and goes down with you at night  
...He gives you His kingdom,  
every day.*

# BOOKS – BOOKS – BOOKS

# PAMPHLETS

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5½ x 8½ inches, 256 pages.

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- #105-B 86 page Resource List \$10.00 ea + S/H

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- #111 10 copies ..... \$20.00 (includes S/H)

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  - #104 Franciscan View of Christ
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  - #106 Peace & Justice
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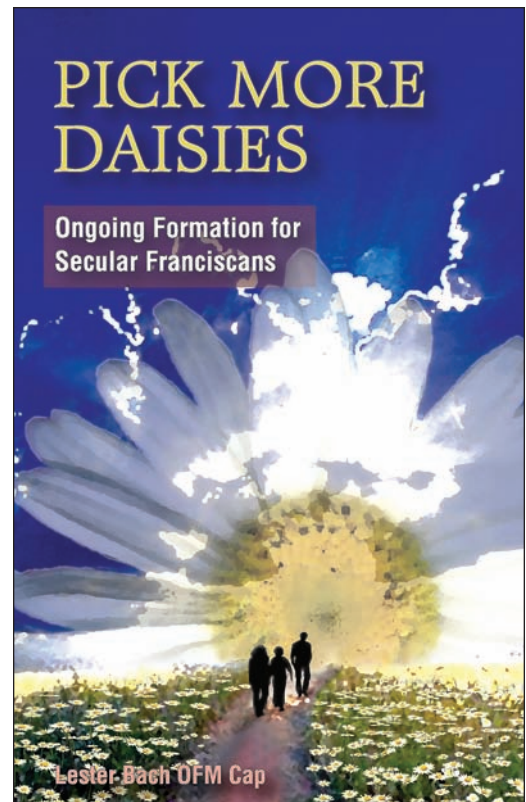
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**LESTER BACH, OFM, CAP.**, is a member of the Capuchin-Franciscan Province of St. Joseph. He has worked with the Secular Franciscans since the 1960's. In addition he has served at Retreat Centers, served as Province formation director as well as preaching parish missions with Isaiah 43 and Missions 2000. He presently resides at San Damiano Friary in Madison, WI.

***Editor's Book Review:***

Discovering the book *Pick More Daisies* by Lester Bach, OFM, Cap., was like being in the water searching for an oyster with a pearl in it and finding *an oyster full of pearls*. It is a book for practicing Seculars, who have true vocations and wish to be true to their vocations. Readers will find many insightful helps for daily living, which are intended to navigate one over and around many of the pitfalls, which have harmed and misled other Franciscans. This is a book for everyone in the local fraternity and a must have for the newly professed. It is a book for Ongoing Formation, which is easy to read and even easier to digest.

Pax, Frances



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