

TAU-USA

PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL FRATERNITY OF THE
SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER IN THE UNITED STATES

News letter



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR—



ANNA GERACI, SFO

Dear brothers and sisters in St. Francis,

I am exceedingly grateful to the National Executive Committee for entrusting me with the amazing opportunity to serve as your new editor of TAU-USA, I am joyfully honored and profoundly humbled.

The TAU-USA has been a part of our Franciscan lives for many years, providing us with information, inspiration, education, and networking opportunities. It has always given us excellent examples of how we lovingly respond to our Franciscan mission— going from gospel to life and life to gospel.

Heartfelt writing and fraternal sharing allow us to experience one another's response to "preach the Gospel always, use words if necessary". These engaging examples of our brothers and sisters accomplishments decidedly inspire us.

I look forward to continue building upon the communication excellence of my esteemed predecessor, Frances Wicks, SFO, whose labors over the past 7 years helped bring Franciscan members throughout our nation together as the one family that we are. She was truly blessed with the friendship and support of a wonderful staff.

I am already much indebted to many of you for your wonderful support and welcoming emails. Now I look forward to working together with our TAU-USA staff, all our contributors, and our entire Franciscan family. I know that together with your prayers and contributions, we will make Frances proud, and we will continue to offer you a communication vehicle of the highest quality.

I am particularly glad to be given this opportunity at this time where there has never been a more exciting or challenging time to be in communications. Today we have far greater demands for information, education, collaboration and involvement. As Secular Franciscans it is one thing for us to believe in our Franciscan mission; it is another thing to live it and see it lived out. In this issue, (see page 12) we have such a shining example in Brother David Buer, OFM, our 2010 Nafra Peace Award winner.

As the official publication of the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order, we are wonderfully inclusive. We do not seek submissions by specific geographical or membership status. Whether you are from New York, Washington, Florida, Texas, California ... we want to hear from you!

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2009—2012

National Executive Council Secular Franciscan Order

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“BRINGING THE GIFT OF GOSPEL LIVING TO LIFE”

Dear National Family,

Please permit me to invite your prayers for our Annual NAFRA Gathering at the Franciscan Renewal Center, “Casa de Paz y Bien” in Scottsdale, Arizona, October 26-31, 2010. I wish all of you could join the Regional Ministers from all over the United States and the National Executive Council (NEC), with our Executive Council Appointees and our honored Guests, but the Renewal Center does not have room for all 14,000+ of us!

Allow me instead to offer you a mini-preview, a virtual tour, of our Annual Gathering as I hope it will actually play out when we come together, with God’s great grace, for Renewal within ourselves and throughout our beloved Order.

The theme of our 2010 Annual NAFRA Gathering is the title that you see above: “Bringing the Gift of Gospel Living to Life.”

This title is a summary of your NEC’s vision, gleaned from our last two meetings, first in frozen St. Louis in February, then in steamy Washington, DC in July.

These brief words center on our essential Franciscan call:

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“The rule and life of the Secular Franciscans is this: to observe the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by following the example of St. Francis of Assisi who made Christ the inspiration and the center of his life with God and people” (SFO Rule, Art 4). Let us pray for one another that by making Fraternity, Formation, Communication and Youth our priorities, the gift of our Franciscan call will extend to all life, bringing the Gospel light of Christ to all who live in darkness.

Remembering that the four elements of every fraternity meeting are: Prayer, Formation, Social and Business, AND in that order of importance, we will open our meeting on **Tuesday evening, October 26**, with Evening Prayer, then will proceed to our Mass with the newly elected and first Auxiliary Bishop for the Diocese of Phoenix, Bishop Eduardo Nevares. We will finish this first evening with Brother David Buer, OFM receiving the 2010 NAFRA Peace Award for his outstanding work with the homeless and with Peace and Justice issues for many years.

We trust that both Bishop Nevares and Brother David will offer Spirit-filled words of formation and transformation. A social will follow.

Wednesday, October 27, will be a full day of sharing between the National Minister and the National Executive Council with all the Regional Ministers. The Regional Ministers will have ample time to gather in their Geographic Groups to share “best practices” and challenges from their various Regions. The day will finish with a panel discussion on immigration, perhaps most appropriate since we are bearing witness to Christ’s love in the great state of Arizona.

By contrast, **Thursday, October 28**, will start with a full morning of Formation as we get a “sneak preview” of the new and eagerly awaited National Formation Manual.

In the afternoon, we will meet our new Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC), Diversity and Franciscan Youth and Young Adult Chairpersons.

Brief 5 minute introductions of their valued work will follow from 11 different presenters, including our honored guests, in no particular order:

- Fr. Mike Lasky, OFM Conv., Franciscans International
- Fr. Larry Janezic, OFM, Franciscan Action Network
- Dr. Kim Smolik, from Franciscan Mission Service
- Alan Ouimet, SFO, Franciscan Family Apostolate
- Bill Wicks, SFO, our Historian
- Sharon Deveaux, SFO, our Archivist
- Mary and Bob Stronach, both SFO’s, with Public Relations
- Vickie Klick, SFO, *and*
- Dan Mulholland, SFO, Technology
- Ed Shirley, SFO, Ecumenical
- Anna Geraci, SFO, TAU-USA
- Bob Fitzsimmons, SFO, Formation

Each of these wonderful people will enjoy a two-hour opportunity in the evening at the entertaining and informative “Francesco’s Café,” where they can meet and share with as many people as they wish. It should be a lively day and evening!

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NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL



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Friday, October 29, will be our famous Day-Away, when we will tour the best of the local sites, concluding with a Mass at the Cathedral in Phoenix.

Saturday, October 30, will be our last full day of sharing, including our special Rite of Remembrance for our beloved in all our local fraternities and regions who have returned home to the Lord in the past year. It's a sad, but joyful service that always brings a spirit of thanksgiving for the lives that we have shared with our departed until we may meet again in glory. We will break bread together at the Lord's Table with the living and the dead. We will have our final social.

Our travel day, **Sunday, October 31**, Halloween, will conclude with a Roundtable Discussion on what the week has brought and where and how and with whom our Franciscan Family is journeying in the future.

I hope you have enjoyed this mini-tour! In exchange, I beg for your prayers for all of us trying to bringing this gift of Gospel Living to Life. As St. Francis said, "Let us begin again ..."

Peace and love,
the greatest good,
Tom and your
National Executive Council

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

(Continued from page 1)

TAU-USA is aiming high to reach out and further improve our communications with one another. The National Executive Committee has initiated a new effort to translate key documents and materials such as our new formation manual. The translations will be made and reviewed by specific language and translation teams in the SFO. This issue of TAU-USA marks the launch of this initial project by having our National Minister's letter translated into four (4) languages: Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, and Polish. *These translations may be found on the NAFRA Internet web page.*

A special thanks to Michelle Kim, SFO, for being instrumental in having initiated this new effort, and leading in the creation of the 4 specific and separate language teams. Many thanks, equally, to all the individual members of these translation teams who have embraced this new effort and agreed to become a part of an exciting new endeavor.

Before closing, I must offer a few words of special thanks ...
to Bill Wicks, SFO, for his generous support and guidance;
"I'll do my very best to maintain Francis' legacy.

to Connie Quatrano, SFO, for helping "lift me up" during the most challenging of times this past year; and whose gracious letter of nomination to the Executive Committee, got the ball rolling in what would ultimately lead to my becoming TAU-USA's new editor.

to my "mentor", Fr. Daniel Morey, OFM, who many years ago, patiently taught me a desk-top publishing program that would open up so many new worlds. "You've given me far more than I can ever offer in return."

And last, but never least, to my wonderfully supportive husband, Joseph, and my Mom, Marie, who willingly double up on any and all household chores, and tip-toe around the house so as not to distract me when I'm on a deadline with my varying projects.

I look forward to meeting and greeting a great many of you over the course of time and learning, laughing, and loving together. Whether it be in person, phone, letter or simply email communications—let's get together, and let us begin now for we have much to share.

Your sister in Sts. Francis and Clare,
Anna

Celebrate

HOW'S YOUR "YEAR" BEEN?

Our year of "Celebrate Youth" will draw to a close this October.

Youth

What large or small steps have we made this year?

Are we more aware of the youth around us?

Are we more aware of how our Rule and Constitutions address youth?

Have we reached out to youth and young adults?

How have we celebrated youth?

WE HOPE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

by **JAN PARKER, SFO**
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE
COUNCIL SECRETARY



As we gather this coming October as a National Family we will acknowledge this past year's efforts. Each local fraternity is asked to write about their response to this year's theme and send it to your Regional Minister as soon as possible – two or three sentences are all we need! With the help of some SFO troubadours we hope these sentences can be put into song, or at least compiled in a little book. This "theme song" will be sung at our NAFRA gathering in October.

MOVING AHEAD FOR YOUTH — NOMINATIONS NEEDED —

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As this TAU-USA is going to press our National Executive Council is praying in regards to a plea for nominations from National Minister Tom Bello, sent by email to the NAFRA-L list on July 30th. We hope to have good news to announce as gather for our annual Chapter in October, but at this time we are still open for nominations.

Tom's invitation follows:
For Franciscan Youth,

the National Executive Council is looking, ideally, for a "young" adult or perhaps two "young adults," who can advise fraternities at all levels, especially the local fraternities, on how to attract and motivate Franciscan Youth to work together to further the Franciscan charism.

This person should know the webpage on Franciscan youth:

<http://franciscanyouthusa.com>

and should have direct experience with Youth Ministry. This person might be expected to attend the Annual NAFRA Gathering in Arizona October 26-31, 2010, as well as World Youth Day 2011 in Spain. If you have any advice, suggestions or names, please send them to any member of the NEC or to me.

If you would like to make a formal nomination, please check if the person would like to be considered and have them send a resume and a personal statement to the NEC or to me as to why they would like to be considered for the Chair of the Franciscan Youth/Young Adult Commission. Any nominations made after a Youth/Young Adult Chair has been found will be considered for the Commission.

LET US CONTINUE TO CELEBRATE YOUTH!

We acknowledge with gratitude the wonderful work and the foundation that has been laid in past years by Kathy Taormina and the Youth Commission.

We know that good things have also happened this past year as we have focused on our awareness and outreach to youth. Our progress has always been a communion of our prayers and our efforts, undergirded with love, initiated and blessed by the Spirit.

As we look forward to the next phase for the SFO and Youth, I leave you with a quote from our joyful National Vice-Minister Elaine who says,

"Let our song be sweet and let our song be strong, for our future is to be found in our Youth!"



CELEBRATE YOUTH

by BIEN TORRES, SFO
ST. FRANCIS FRATERNITY
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

C—COME let us celebrate our Franciscan Youths together and,

E—ENCOUNTER Jesus our Lord with one another and show His

L—LOVE, with Mary and the Father's overflowing love and Jesus'

E—ENDURING sacrifices He bore to Calvary

B—BEARING pains from the heavy cross and scourges He received for our sake as He

R—REVEALED the Father's forgiving and everlasting last

A—AND atoned for our misgivings and sinfulness.

T—TOGETHER, together, let's celebrate youth and thank Jesus and the Holy Spirit in

E—EVERLASTING glory and praises, and make our young Franciscans come and say:

Y—YES, we'll follow the Lord Jesus in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi in the

O—ORDU FRANCISCANUS SECULARES with

U—UNDIVIDED Franciscan spirit in proclaiming God's Kingdom with

T—TRUE and sincere minds and

H—HEARTS true to live the Gospel to Life, and Life to Gospel.

**COME, CELEBRATE, CELEBRATE,
LET'S CELEBRATE YOUTH,
COME, CELEBRATE, CELEBRATE,
LET'S CELEBRATE YOUTH.**

Franciscans International Partners with Youth to Give Voice to the World's Most Vulnerable

by HEATHER METCALF

"There is a growing awareness of the sublime dignity of human persons, who stand above all things and whose rights and duties are universal and inviolable. They ought, therefore, to have ready access to all that is necessary for living a genuinely human life: for example, food, clothing, housing, the right freely to choose their state of life and set up a family, the right to education, work, to their good name, to respect, to proper knowledge, the right to act according to the dictates of conscience and to safeguard their privacy, and rightful freedom, including freedom of religion."

(Gaudium et Spes
Pastoral Constitution on the
Church in the Modern World
(December 7, 1965))



Franciscans International (FI) represents Franciscans at the United Nations advocating for the rights of the world's most vulnerable. FI advocates at the UN in the spirit of St. Francis, who found God among the rejected, the despised and the poor and worked to build the Kingdom of God on earth together with them.

FI is asking students to join our brothers and sisters from around the world in furthering our efforts on behalf of the world's poor by participating in our **Human Rights Competition**. High school and college students are asked to research issues affecting the world's most vulnerable and express through words, video, song, and art:

"WHY HUMAN RIGHTS MATTER TO ME"

FI will be partnering with schools, universities and parishes across America to launch the competition during the Feast of St. Francis. Each institution will select a winner among its participants to take part in our national competition where the board of Franciscans International will determine the top two winners.

Those selected will be flown to New York in order to spend a day experiencing the ministry of Franciscans International at the United Nations.

Many say the human rights of the youth should be protected because they are the leaders of tomorrow.

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Franciscans International believes the youth should be involved with the protection of their rights and the rights of others, not solely because they are the leaders of tomorrow, but because they are the citizens of today.

Come hear Fr. Mike Lasky, OFM Conv. speak about Franciscans International's "**Human Rights Competition**" at our National Conference on October 27, 2010,

and/or email us at

humanrightscamp@fiop.org
to learn how you can participate.

To learn more, please visit our website at:

www.franciscansinternational.org

Celebrating Youth and Young Adults through the Gospel of Service

by BETTI LONGINOTTI, SFO

How many youth and young adults do you know, would live and work a week in the summer without air conditioning, TV, or computer/internet?

Six members from the Diocese of Charlotte participated in a Franciscan Youth and Young Adult Mission trip to the St. Francis Inn in Philadelphia, July 11-19, 2010.

Two from Charlotte, Immaculate Conception Parish, Gabe Hemple and Jake Major; Three from Winston Salem, Our Lady of Mercy/Fatima Parish, Roberta Basquin, Katie Longinotti and Betti Longinotti; One from Greensboro, Saint Paul's Parish, Mary Kate Ferry.

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We served the ministries of the St. Francis Inn, Philadelphia-(Kensington neighborhood), preparing and serving meals to the poor and homeless, assisting with deliveries, and the St. Bernadette's Thrift Shop.

The Team of the St. Francis Inn honored them at their Sunday Mass on July 19th within the Inn's Chapel. Brother Fred, Team member at the Inn said, "You all did the 'Iron Man'... not many groups commit to a full week of service, especially during the summer or come this distance to serve!"



The World Youth Day vigil with Pope Benedict XVI, on Saturday evening, August 20, 2011, will culminate with Eucharistic adoration, in which the famous Spanish *Arfe Monstrance* will be used.

Almost 500 years old, it stands approximately nine feet tall, covered with gold and silver. The lightness of its architectural forms in silvergilt and the splendid proportions of all its elements proclaim it a masterpiece.

It weighs 195 kilos and includes 5600 pieces. Enrique de Arfe worked on the monstrance from 1517 to 1524. Juan Sánchez, dean of the Cathedral of Toledo, where the masterpiece is usually housed, said, "We have gladly parted with the monstrance for the youth day celebration thinking of the very great end it will serve."

<http://www.corpuschristitoledo.es/corpus/Ecustodia.php>

YOUTH

FRANCISCAN YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS OF THE SOUTHEAST BSSF REGION



Participants with Team*: (back row, left to right) Brother Jeff*, Sister Leslie*, Gabe Hemple, Judy*, Barb*, Brother Fred*, Jake Major; (front row, left to right) Sister Mary*, Roberta Basquin, SFO Candidate, Katie Longinotti, Friar Michael*, Betti Longinotti, SFO, Mary Kate Ferry.

Traveling 10-12 hours by Amtrak to Philadelphia, the participants lived within the Youth Volunteer House of the Franciscan community, on the block where the Inn is located, with no air conditioning, TV or computer. Though we had our challenges and sacrifices to bear, we were richly blessed!

You can learn more about the ministry of the St. Francis Inn by viewing a film created by filmmaker, Gerry Straub, *Room at the Inn*, which may be viewed by a link from his blog at:

<http://gerrystraub.wordpress.com/films>

Straub also wrote the book entitled, *Sun and Moon Over Assisi*, where, as a witness, he refers to an encounter at the St. Francis Inn as the conversion point in his life, from atheist to faithful believer.

More information on the Franciscan Youth and Young Adults of the Southeast, and apostolate of the Secular Franciscan Order (Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region) may be found on our website at:

<https://sites.google.com/site/franciscanyouthsoutheast>

or by joining our Facebook Group, *Franciscan Youth and Young Adults of the Southeast*.

Betti serves the Southeast region of the Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis, Secular Franciscan Order, as their Youth and Young Adult Council Animator.

THE SEVEN JOYS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY MOTHER OF GOD FRATERNITY in Kennebunk, Maine, celebrated youth in a big way this past August. The fraternity, is based at St. Anthony's Franciscan monastery, and are blessed to have a close relationship with the friars, many of whom came from Lithuania during World War II. For a week, the friars hosted some of our Secular Franciscan and Franciscan Youth (YouFra) events.

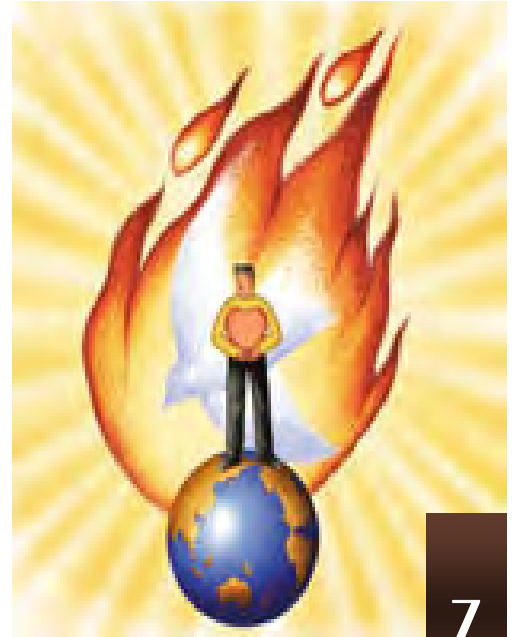
The National President of the Lithuanian Franciscan Youth Fraternity (YouFra) and SFO, the YouFra International delegate in the National Council of Lithuania, and the YouFra National Spiritual Assistant visited specifically to help evangelize American youth in our locale by speaking about their experiences in serving the Lord through YouFra.

Our fraternity has been laying the groundwork for a few years to begin a YouFra chapter. To this end, we organized a day dedicated to familiarizing area young people, aged 18-35, with the mission of YouFra locally, within in the United States, and worldwide. YouFra has a strong evangelistic presence in Lithuania for their young people, and they were excited about this opportunity to educate others about the mission and calling of YouFra.

On Saturday, August 28, 2010, with the help of our fraternity Spiritual Assistant, Fr. John; Lithuanian Provincial Fr. Astijus; and the National YouFra Spiritual Assistant of Lithuania, Fr. Algis, we arranged a Spirit-filled day on monastery grounds for SFO members and young adults discerning a possible call to YouFra.

At 9:00 am, participants gathered for the morning session of conferences, testimonies, and worship. This was held in two groups, professed secular Franciscans and those who are discerning YouFra.

After a brief break in the afternoon activities continued, concluding the day with Mass at 6:00 pm.



Budding Filmmakers Take Note:

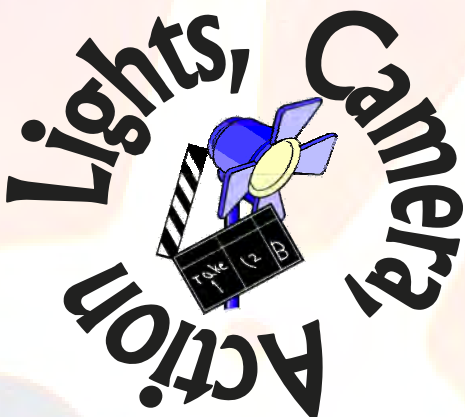
Your filmmaking skills could earn you a trip to next year's *World Youth Day* in Spain.

The organization Goodness Reigns is sponsoring a short-film contest for Catholic teenagers and young adults. The films, which must be seven minutes or shorter, should have a subject relating to one of these four categories:

Church history; Sacraments; Church teachings; or present-day missionary spirit of an individual or Church Ministry.

The top filmmaker in each category will win a trip to Madrid for the youth gathering, which takes place August 16-21, 2011. There will also be awards for high school group and young-adult group entries.

Deadline to compete for the contest is December 1, 2010. For more information, visit: www.goodnessreigns.com



A CALLING To Know God and Share Him with Troubled Youth

by **ROBBIE MACDONALD, SFO**



It is the fourth Sunday of the month. It is a typical San Diego day, sunny with high clouds. As I drive up State Route 163, I wonder how the teen-agers will respond to today's Gospel reading. I exit the freeway and proceed to my destination, Juvenile Hall.

8 I get out of my car, greet the team members that got there before me and we wait for the remainder of our team. We are a mixed group men, women, young adults and the occasional deaconate candidate. We are called to know and love God and share Him with the young people held here. A priest is assigned for each week. He comes to the facility to hear confessions and offer spiritual counseling. When all the team members have arrived, we join hands, and we pray for the Holy Spirit to inspire us and for the Lord to open the hearts of the children we are about to visit. We are buzzed into the facility. We hand over our drivers licenses in exchange for badges that let us go inside the facility to visit the children.

We walk to the central area and are given our "assignments" - young boys (under 15), girls, or older boys (generally 16-17 years old). We are given two areas and go to the units in pairs. If only two of us have come to the facility, we go alone and must decide which two areas won't have church today. We visit each area for 40 minutes.

Next, we hand out the Gospel readings for the day. We ask for volunteers to read. The girls and younger boys all want to read. The older boys are a little reticent. They seem more peer conscious. But, eventually, four boys do put their hand up to read. When the reading is finished, we ask questions. The questions are open ended - what about the reading spoke to you?, did anything "jump" off the page at you? Can you explain further? We tell them that there is no right or wrong answer. The girls and younger boys often have lively and good discussions. The older boys need a little coaxing. There are times when there is little said. There are also times when there is just no way they will stop talking about the readings and the Lord.

When the discussions are over, we pray intercessory prayers: for just results to court hearings, for the children and their families, for the officers and their families. There have been a couple of times when the children have prayed for us. That was a pleasant surprise. At times, someone will ask us to pray for a quick placement. That is perhaps the saddest intercession of all. You see, that young person is not going home or in all likelihood to a family member, he or she is being placed in the foster care system or going to a group home for drug and alcohol rehabilitation.

Before we leave, we play music and pass out Divine Mercy Prayer Cards and Saint Dismas Icon cards. The cards we hand out must be unlaminated and made of paper not plastic. It is interesting that when the 3x5 inch picture of The Divine Mercy is held up and the children are asked who would like one, every hand in the room goes up. I say a silent prayer thanking the Marians of the Immaculate Conception for having these cards available.

As we leave, the officers thank us for coming and we thank them for allowing us to be there today. We turn in the badges and get our drivers licenses back in return. As we part company, we hug each other and say we will see each other next month.

Driving home, I am filled with a deep sense of peace and joy, yet at the same time, my heart is breaking. You see, the recidivism rate for Juvenile Hall is 29%. I pray that the Lord used me today to change the heart of one of those children in the 29% category to keep them from becoming one of those unfortunate lost children that go into California Youth Authority and eventually become one of the lost children of God in Prison where the recidivism rate it 70%. I will keep returning to Juvenile Hall on Sundays until they take away my driver's license.

Would you consider praying and meditating to perhaps discern a calling to Restorative Justice Ministry? The need is so very great.

THROUGH A PERSISTENT FAITH

Edited by

EMANUELA DE NUNZIO, SFO

On April 11, 2010, Cardinal Franc Rodé, Prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, published an article with this title in *L'Osservatore Romano*, on the current status of the Constitutions of the institutions that are under his purview. Among these, as we all know, is the Secular Franciscan Order. Therefore, it seems useful to present to our brothers and sisters around the world some excerpts of this article that is so influential and so helpful for the strengthening and growth of our Fraternities.

In view of a process of revitalizing and redeveloping the Institutions that should remain faithful to the original inspiration, Cardinal Rodé considers it necessary to have a renewed emphasis on the Rules and Constitutions. They represent the surest standard for witnessing to the needs of the day, because, in them, lies the authentic charism recognized by the Church.

In the Constitutions, we will find inspiration and the means to encourage, both individually and communally, spiritual maturity and apostolic service, following our own tradition and in communion with the Church. This faithfulness happens through the acceptance of the constitutional rules in their entirety: we can not “interpret them” taking what we like and rejecting what may be less to our liking!

The Cardinal writes,

“The worm of individualism and a misconstrued freedom present in our society so strongly as to diminish, not only the consciences of individuals, but the very communities and institutions, now make it even more urgent to understand the true meaning and the fundamental value of the Constitutions for the life of an Institution. In today’s Western or postmodern culture, there is almost a religious pluralism. Everyone has his or her own way to live, his/her own way of thinking, personal guidance/orientation systems, different modes of acting.”

Even the Rules and Constitutions are victims of a similar mentality, through which common rules/standards or requirements are viewed with suspicion, if not completely rejected, because they crush or bring humiliation to personal individualism.

Cardinal Rodé recommends focusing in on on-going formation with regular reading and a more detailed study of the Constitutions. And he adds: “The Constitutions are not just any book that, while important, always ends up forgotten on library shelves. Constitutions are a book to keep with us, to continue reading, because in them, we don’t find just a story that we already know, but a life plan, a divine call, which is begun each morning and whose fulfillment requires a journey of faithfulness to God and to men throughout the day.”

I believe that these insights and these recommendations are very important for us, Secular Franciscans, especially since the Cardinal concludes his article mentioning specifically St. Francis and relating the words he gave to the Order:

“Listen, My children of the Lord and my brothers (and sisters), And listen to my words. /
Incline the ear of your heart / and obey the voice of the Son of God /
Observe with all your heart his rules and carry out his recommendations completely. /
Praise Him because He is good, /
and exalt Him in your works, because it was for this He sent you into this whole world, /
so that you may bear witness to His voice / by word and by deed /
and that you may make known to all / that there is no one who is Almighty except Him. /
Persevere in discipline and in holy obedience / and carry out with a good and firm intention /
those things that you have promised.



CNSA

NEWS & VIEWS

Franciscan life in the 21st Century

Lester Bach OFM Cap

Look it up!

For Seculars who may not know or use the *Handbook for Spiritual Assistance to the SFO*, here are some of the topics the *Handbook* contains. CNSA revised the *Handbook* in 2005. It includes ordinary materials and ideas that relate to spiritual assistance and the SFO. Here is a brief list of some of its contents.



1. **Segment A** - Material about SA's / SA job descriptions for various levels / Role of the Major superiors / Appointments / etc. **Segment A1-A24.**
2. **Segment B** - Rite for installation of SA / Pastoral visitations / *Process for establishing a new fraternity / Responsibilities of the sponsoring fraternity* / Issues regarding fraternity needs and difficulties. **Segment B1-B23.**
3. **Segment C** - CNSA recommendations on a variety of issues - Archival material / Prison ministry / Witnessing elections / etc / Job descriptions of executive secretary & treasurer for CNSA. **Segment C1-C14.**
4. **Segment D** - Documents that are also included in the *Essential Documents of the SFO*. In addition the *Handbook* contains: SFO references to canon law / Guidelines for formation (1985 & 2001) / Franciscan Youth / etc. **Segment D1-D157.**

The *Handbook* can be obtained from Smokey Valley Printing - Box 189 - Lindsborg, KS 67456 - \$15.50 plus S/H. Councils and SA's are encouraged to have this resource available.

What think Ye?

When I peruse Franciscan materials, whether printed, on TV or radio, or converse with Franciscans, we do not often tackle the issue of our Franciscan "identity." At times I recall a Spanish proverb which says: *How beautiful to do nothing and then rest afterwards!*

The SFO International Presidency, in addressing the "identity" issue, expresses some reasons for this "lack of identity."

E.g. *The fragmentation of society: deprivation of the culture of solidarity, that makes individuals live "near," or "opposite," and not "together." ... highly guarded privacy, which creates a permanent conflict between the good of the individual and the good of the community. ... The culture of suspicion and distrust that undermine the base of a civil society.* (Monthly Dossiere - CIOFS - July, 2010 - Year 1-No 7)

One "identity" issue involves our inability to *listen* with an open mind and heart when we have already made up our minds. Personal problems, desires, needs, frustrations, opinions, and fears influence our ability to *listen*. They color our interpretation of issues and events. Active *listening* allows us to understand another point of view even if it differs from our own.

Franciscans seek a "Franciscan sense" regarding oil spills, public guffaws, political party affiliations, arguments supporting particular issues, or encouraging dialogue when we deal with issues. It is difficult to find the "common good" if our minds are already cemented in place. Personal issues can hinder our commitment to the SFO as well as our "Franciscan identity."

When we gather in community we help one another by *listening* with an open mind and heart. We may occasionally fail to *listen* even within fraternity life, or family life, or Church life, or parish life, or neighborhood life. We may follow personal ways of thinking and not allow the Franciscan spirit to move us. Yet, our "identity" calls us to a *listening* attitude in order to develop ideas, policies, structures and actions that reflect the Gospel of Jesus.

A vibrant Franciscan community helps us learn to *live* our "identity" with a willingness to change. This "need" is part of ongoing formation.

Let them love one another, as the Lord says: "This is my commandment; love one another as I have loved you." (John 15:12) Let them express the love they have for one another by their deeds ...

Let them revile no one. Let them not grumble or detract from others, for it is written: "Gossips and detractors are detestable to God." (Romans 1:29-31) Let them be modest by showing graciousness toward everyone. ...

The Earlier Rule - Francis of Assisi - The Saint - Page 72

At times people barely *listen* to one another. Their words attempt to prove the rightness of their opinions. Private opinions rule the day - if you can think or talk faster than the other person. Cemented opinions defeat dialogue. *Good listeners* realize that dialogue about the "common good" and "Franciscan identity" can get lost in the presence of simultaneous monologues.

And Furthermore!

Living the Franciscan way of life is not done in some private corner of life. On the contrary, we develop a Franciscan model of living that applies the Rule wherever we happen to be.

The 1978 SFO Rule helps us here. Consider: Are the articles below alive in your life? Do you ever discuss them at gatherings? *Is personal conversion needed?* Neglecting *ongoing formation* assists our ignorance. *But who wants to belong to an ignorant SFO?*

Secular Franciscans, with a gentle and courteous spirit, accept all people as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ. (#13)

Let the Secular Franciscans seek a proper spirit of detachment from temporal goods by simplifying their own material needs (#11).

... they should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon. (#19)

A sense of community will make them joyful and ready to place themselves on an equal basis with all people, especially the lowly for whom they shall strive to create conditions of life worthy of people redeemed by Christ. (#13)

... let prayer and contemplation be the soul of all they are and do. (#8)

Secular Franciscans ... are called to build a more fraternal and evangelical world so that the kingdom of God might be brought about more effectively. (#14)

Let them individually and collectively be in the forefront in promoting justice by the testimony of their human lives and their courageous initiatives. (#15)

... they should strive to move from the temptation of exploiting creation to the Franciscan concept of universal kinship. (#18)

Our Franciscan way of life has a lot to offer. We bring this "identity" to the Church and the world. It reflects an attitude of openness, looking for the good of the entire community and not simply for personal perks.

The Holy Spirit enables us to live a life dedicated to living the SFO Rule. Documents do not make us holy, but generous love can achieve that goal. A prayerful Franciscan spirit sees prayer and action as partners.

It is a privilege to be called by God to the SFO. *God's will for us is expressed in the SFO Rule.* We are called to personal conversion. Though *conversion* may be difficult we will not ignore what we have professed to do .. and *be!* Your contribution to dialogue and understanding will help develop a strong personal and fraternal Franciscan life, a gift to the world and the Church - expressing a true "Franciscan identity."

The goal is not just to make you "look good." Rather, it is a call to make your family "look good," your parish "look good," your neighborhood "look good," your Secular Franciscan Order "look good," your world "look good," your work place "look good." Such "looking good" comes from the heart and finds concrete expression in our external behavior. We help one another to "look good," and contribute to the needs of the world and the Church. Our prayerfulness spills into action which brings joy and hope to our world and our Church.

Words to Ponder

Vinal Van Benthem SFO, a local Secular Franciscan, regularly writes an article for the bulletin of St. Raphael's parish in Oshkosh, WI, where she works. The last paragraph of the July 25th, 2010, article adds fitting words to the ideas we have shared.

A fisherman in New Orleans wants the same things for his family as a farmer in Ruanda; a soldier's widow in Iraq has the same concerns for her children as a coal miner's widow in West Virginia. Each asks for a fish. And yet, often we are tempted to hand them a snake. People caught in an unprecedented economic downturn ask for an egg. Do we give them a scorpion? (Cf. Luke 11:11-13) "Give us this day our daily bread ..." Jesus taught us to say these words, but these words do not belong to us. Others also pray these words. "Whatsoever you do to the least of my brothers and sisters ..." These are difficult times and difficult questions. There are no easy answers. But we must at least get up and open the door.

... the harvest of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, fidelity, gentleness and self control. Against such things there is no law.

If the Spirit is the source of our life, let the Spirit also direct its course.

Galatians 5:22-25

Dear National Family,

Please join me in congratulating
BROTHER DAVID BUER, OFM,
 recipient of the
 2010 NAFRA Peace Award!

Congratulations as well to the Saint Thomas More Region and nine of the Region's established Fraternities as well as an emerging Korean Fraternity for their nomination of Brother David.

Of course the nominations speak for themselves, but permit to say what a blessing it was for me to speak by phone with Brother David. He was working at the homeless shelter written about in his nominations when I called.

He shared with me how much the NAFRA Peace Award meant to me. He said he was (or had been) good friends with the Friar who had presented the Peace Award to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in the 1960's. He noted that he himself was a Secular before he was a Friar, becoming a Secular in 1979, I believe, and a Friar in 1991. *(Our cell-phone reception was in and out, so don't hold me to his exact words or these dates!)*

He humbly, but joyfully accepted our Peace Award, and plans to attend our Annual NAFRA Gathering at the Franciscan Renewal Center "Casa de Paz y Bien" in Scottsdale, Arizona, on Tuesday, October 26 to receive this award. Please plan to introduce yourself to him if you are joining us in Arizona this October!

Again, I congratulate Brother David and thank him for accepting and planning to be with us at our NAFRA gathering. I congratulate and thank all of you who nominated, and all those nominated, for the 2010 NAFRA Peace Award. They are all an inspiring group who challenge us to carry on all the good work for Peace.

May the Lord give us Peace!

Tom Bello, SFO
 NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MINISTER



MEET OUR 2010 NAFRA
 PEACE AWARD RECIPIENT:

BROTHER DAVID BUER, OFM

The Saint Thomas More Regional Executive Council, and their local fraternities, nominated Brother David. They provided a wonderful history of his unwavering service to our marginalized and too often forgotten brothers and sisters. Due to space limitations, TAU-USA offers you an edited version featuring but a few highlights of his many attributes which could fill volumes. —Editor

Brother David Buer, OFM, from the Santa Barbara Province of Franciscan Friars, California, has made a life time of seeking out our the poor; society's forgotten men and women, and serving them with dignity, kindness, and love. He clearly understands that by serving others will we find peace. He is a role model for not only Franciscans or Catholics, but for all people. He evangelizes through the way he lives his life- using words when necessary.

Brother David came to the Las Vegas, Nevada area in the late 1990's. He quickly recognized that even though Catholic Charities and the Salvation Army provided overnight shelter and beds for the homeless in Las Vegas, there was a tremendous need for a daytime home for homeless men. In 1997, through challenging work and the awesome task of raising the funds, Brother David opened *Poverello House* in Las Vegas, near what is known as the *Homeless Corridor*, where many of the homeless live.

It is a welcoming place where homeless men can receive two nutritious meals during their day's stay. The homeless men are also given clothing, blankets, and personal hygiene items, when needed. Showers and laundry facilities are available and are regularly put to good use. The men also can take naps on the beds or watch television or play games for recreation. They can also sit and rest in the large enclosed yard. *Poverello House* was established to provide a place where homeless men could find a safe haven to rest and refresh themselves before they began searching for a bed for the night. It is open five days a week. In 2002, Brother David started a second *Poverello House* in nearby Henderson, Nevada. It also welcomes homeless women one day a week.

Brother David makes sure that the homeless are treated with respect. His humble approach to life is demonstrated by giving and serving our poor and marginalized brothers and sisters. Such as Saint Francis said, "Preach the Gospel, use words if necessary," Brother David preaches the Gospel by his actions. He uses words when necessary, especially when it involves housing, services, or laws that affect the homeless. He's become known to the Las Vegas Mayor and the city council, where he will speak on behalf of the homeless, whenever necessary. His Franciscan spirituality, respect and caring for the homeless (our present day lepers) and preaching the Gospel by living it, has changed and inspired many lives. Brother David is a man of peace. He simply serves others with dignity and grace. He asks nothing for himself.

(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12)

He has taken fraternity members on walks through the Homeless Corridor in Las Vegas to meet personally the homeless, to put faces and humanity on the homeless.

Those type of experiences opened our eyes to see what the homeless have to go through in their everyday lives. Walking the railroad tracks and seeing the tent cities gave everyone a greater appreciation of the blessings that the Lord has given us, and how much we need to give to our fellow brothers and sisters. Brother David has slept on the streets, and spent vigil time for days while fasting only on water. On one of the vigils, he was interviewed by a local television station. A woman watching the newscast saw her brother in the background. She had not seen him in years. This is the Holy Spirit at work.

Always in motion, and always seeking to help others, he never says “no” to anyone who needs help. He models Franciscan spirituality and how a Franciscan can lead a life of helping and serving others. He has served as Spiritual Director of the SFO Saint Margaret of Cortona Fraternity who learned a great deal from him by the way he leads a life of peace and joy in all he approaches. The lessons he taught about being Franciscan continue to be valuable and poignant in a city with so much neglect of their homeless populations.

In July 2006, Brother David opened the doors at Saint Francis Cooling Center for the homeless. It was in the basement of an old building on Santa Cruz's property. With the help of volunteers, homeless men were able to spend some time inside a cool building during blistering summers.

In Winter 2007, he rented a van and with the supportive help of generous contributors, started the “Soup Patrol.” A winter outreach ministry to the homeless, where he went out each evening providing hot soup, hot chocolate, bread, cookies and blankets to the homeless. From 6:00 to 9:00 pm, he and a helper would drive around, seeking out known areas where the homeless camped.

He considers it a blessing to have worked almost thirty years with the homeless — the Open Door community in Atlanta, St. Francis Center in Denver, the Franciscan House of Mary and Joseph in Chicago, the Catholic Workers in Las Vegas, Los Angeles and elsewhere.

He is still amazed at how blessed the work is when the poor and homeless are treated with respect and dignity as we work to get their basic needs met. Saint Paul's challenging words remind us that without love, it is nothing.

Brother David recently opened a Poverello Hospitality House here in Tucson similar to the one in Las Vegas. The homeless can come by appointment to spend a day in a home where they can take a shower, wash their clothes, get needed clothes and have a cooked meal.



He is very involved in the “No More Deaths” movement which works with humanitarian help to help the migrants coming across the border. He regularly goes on patrol in the southern Arizona desert near the Mexican border in order to provide water and shelter from the sizzling sun, food and basic clothing items such as hats, socks and shoes.

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Poverty has no boundaries and he courageously stands up for the immigrants who seek a better life.

Brother David served Saint Thomas More Region as a "de facto" Regional Spiritual Assistant for many months before being officially installed as Regional Spiritual Assistant at the Pastoral and Fraternal Visitation of the Region in July of 2008.

We are blessed to know Brother David as our Region's Spiritual Assistant. He provides compassion and concern to all he meets. He offers ideas on how we as Secular Franciscans can reach out to other Franciscans and has planned activities to do so. At our Regional Council meetings, Executive Council meetings, workshops, days of retreat, and pilgrimages, Brother David peacefully speaks and walks the talk.

FROM MY CORNER OF THE WORLD

by ANNE MULQUEEN, SFO

INTERNATIONAL COUNCILOR, USA
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And now we go to the news from around the world!

INTERNATIONAL CHAPTER 2011

I just received word that the XIII General Chapter of the SFO will be held in San Paulo, Brazil, from October 22 to 29, 2011, at the “Santa Fe” Pastoral Center.

This is the first time a Chapter will be held in South America. The SFO in South America constitutes one third of our Order, and I hear that Youfra is thriving there.

The theme of the Chapter will be *Evangelized to Evangelize* and the sub-themes will be: (a) *specific vocation for a particular mission* and (b) *builders of a fraternal and evangelical world (instruments of peace and reconciliation)*. When I receive further information I will pass it on to you.

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CIOFS CENTRAL THEMES OF ONGOING FORMATION

The January–June 2010, CIOFS Topic I theme was dedicated to *Profession in the SFO*. In July 2010, Topic II was introduced, *A Sense of Belonging to the Secular Franciscan Order*. I wonder how many of you use this material in your fraternities or for personal enrichment. If you do, and I hope you do, would you write and comment on your experience with the material. Then I will be in a better position to discuss it from your point of view at the General Chapter in Brazil. In the coming year the ongoing formation material that I send to your Regional Minister will be dedicated to the theme of the General Chapter. This will give you an opportunity to help me prepare and, in the process, you will be prepared to understand and better equipped to implement the priorities set at that time.

THE SFO IN HAITI

In mid-April, the Presidency wrote to the Secular Franciscan brothers and sisters in Haiti, expressing compassion, communion, and assurance of prayer for those who lost loved ones, homes, employment, etc., as a result of the devastating earthquake of January 2010. In the letter to the Haitian fraternities, the Presidency told them that a delegation from CIOFS would visit Haiti in mid-June. When I have information on that visit, I will pass it along to you.

Our Minister General Encarnita refers to Haiti as “... an icon of the wounded body of Jesus—wounded but risen.” I pray this is true not only for the Haitians but for all who endure personal wounds yet live in the hope of the resurrection. Please remember in prayer those Haitian brothers and sisters who lost their lives in the earthquake:

(from the *Saint Antoine de Padoue Fraternity*) Assilien Roseline and Salomon Marie-Ange, (from the *Saint François d’Assise Fraternity*) Marcel Hector, Anaise Barhelus, Met Mme Duton Emmanuel, Louiza Bonaventure, Andréa Louis-Charles and André Gilbert Baptiste.

**Give them eternal rest,
O Lord, and may Your Light shine
on them forever.**

WORLD YOUTH DAY (WYD) 2011

As some of you know, in 1984 Pope John Paul II inaugurated World Youth Day, which is celebrated annually on a diocesan level on Palm Sunday. Every three years, it is celebrated internationally with youth participating from all over the world.

I did not make it clear when I first began these articles—and I prefer to think of them as letters—that I want them to be personal, informal and informative. And, I want you to be an active participant through communication. Therefore, I have set up an email address for you to contact me. The address is:

Amulqueen.icusa@gmail.com

(The *icusa* stands for
International Councilor, USA)

If you do contact me, tell me about yourself. Ask questions, give comments—whatever—but it would give me joy to hear from you because it is **you** I represent.

The 2011 celebration will be held in Madrid, Spain, August 16-21, 2011. The theme will be *Rooted and built up in Jesus Christ, Firm in the Faith* (Col 2:7). Franciscan youth from across the globe will gather as one body to participate in this event and to bear witness to the Charism of our common Seraphic Father, Saint Francis. These gatherings give our youth and young adults an opportunity to broaden their understanding of fraternity by interacting with brothers and sisters who live in completely different circumstances. This mutual exchange of culture will have a significant impact on their Franciscan formation.

Quoting Holy Scripture, I close this letter with St. Paul’s words and my prayer for you.

And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. —Philippians 1: 9-11

Hope to hear from you,
Your sister, Anne

Newest Franciscan Saint St. Camilla Battista of Varano

by BRET THOMAN, SFO
bret.thoman@gmail.com

ON OCTOBER 17 OF THIS YEAR,
A POOR CLARE MYSTIC FROM CAMERINO, ITALY, WILL BECOME THE NEWEST FRANCISCAN SAINT.

I discovered Camilla Battista of Varano (1458-1524) about six years ago while on retreat with the OFM Franciscan Friars of the Marches, Italy. I was privileged to meet the Poor Clare sisters who now live in a convent in Camerino (30 miles east of Assisi) where St. Camilla Battista's relics are preserved. My wife and I developed a lasting friendship with them due to their overflowing hospitality and generosity. A year ago, they asked us to translate her writings into English, since it had been announced that she would be canonized. In the process, we learned a lot about this holy Poor Clare nun.

Camilla was the name given to the girl born (*illegitimately*) on April 9, 1458 to Giulio Cesare of Varano, the powerful duke and lord of Camerino. Just the same, she was loved by the duke's wife who raised her together with her own children. As a child, she was vivacious and playful. She grew up immersed in the high culture typical of the splendid Renaissance court. She was exposed to poets, historians, philosophers, and painters; learned Latin, and read the classics; learned how to dance, paint, and play musical instruments. Her future was destined to an arranged marriage to strengthen the family dynasty, but when Camilla was eight years old, her life took an unexpected turn.

A Franciscan friar preached a sermon during Lent exhorting his listeners to shed a little tear on Good Friday in memory of Christ's Passion. An enthusiastic little girl, Camilla vowed to shed a tear every Friday, a devotion she maintained for many years. By doing so, the Holy Spirit entered her soul and she began to perceive something in the Cross of Jesus much more valuable than the worldly pleasures and intrigues around her. She later discovered a booklet with a meditation on the Passion of Christ. She prayed and meditated, fasted frequently, mortified her body, confessed often, and met friars for spiritual direction.

In 1481, Camilla entered a Poor Clare convent despite the objections of her powerful father. She donned the veil in Urbino, 50 miles north of Camerino. There the Poor Clares lived a more ascetic life associated with the Franciscan reform of the Strict Observance. Camilla made her profession and took the religious name, Battista (Baptist). Two years later, Sr. Camilla Battista returned to Camerino to found a Poor Clare community of the Strict Observance.



She spent the remaining forty years of her life in her native city praying and meditating deeply within the enclosure where at times she served as Abbess. However, after a political squabble involving her father and the pope's son (*from the notorious Borgia family*), her father and brothers were assassinated. Sr. Camilla Battista was forced to flee south to the Abruzzo region for safety. With the election of Pope Julius II, she was allowed to return to Camerino, where she remained until her death from the plague in 1524. Despite the cruelty of these crimes, she makes no mention of them in her writings; and always maintained steadfast obedience to her superiors and Church authorities.

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As a mystic who spent much time focusing on the cross, it is fruitful to read her works after periods of prayer and even fasting. Her best known work is the *Mental Sorrows of Jesus*, in which she narrates the various sufferings of Jesus. She wrote, *Memories of Jesus* ten years after her novitiate as if Jesus were speaking to her while she was a novice. She wrote an in-depth letter to a spiritual director, in which she recounts her life story; this is now known as her autobiography.

Camilla Battista was beatified in 1843. Although there are many miracles attested to her intercession, the miracle approved for her canonization involved the healing of a child named Clelia Ottaviani in 1877. Afflicted with rickets, Clelia's bones were severely deformed and she could not walk. A relative brought her to her tomb of Camilla Battista for three consecutive days of prayer. On the third day, the little girl straightened her legs, stood up unassisted, walked, and then ran almost two miles to her home. A local doctor who examined her condition before and after the intercession documented that there was no medical explanation for her healing. However, due to powerful anti-Catholic masons in Camerino, his examinations were kept secret until finally released many decades later.

For more information visit: www.saintcamillabattista.it

by EDWARD L. SHIRLEY, SFO, CHAIR, ECUMENICAL/INTERFAITH COMMITTEE

FRANCISCANS ACROSS BORDERS

This summer, I have had the privilege of participating in two ecumenical Franciscan gatherings. The first, in May, was a mini-conference hosted by the Joint Committee on Franciscan Unity at the Cenacle in Chicago. The committee has two representatives each from the Third Order Society of St. Francis (Anglican Communion), the Secular Franciscan Order (Roman Communion) and the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans (from a variety of Christian ecclesial communions). The theme of the conference was “The Elements of Franciscan Unity.” These elements are: Baptism and Vocation, Charism, Christocentric Dimension, and Prophetic Voice. Key leaders from each of the three orders were invited to participate. We began by dividing into groups of three—one from each order—introducing ourselves and sharing how we came to the Franciscan way of life, and the differences it has made in our lives.

What emerged was a remarkably similar pattern: often, it was not so much that being Franciscan introduced people to a *new* way to live the Gospel, but rather, it gave a name to the *only* way they knew how to live the Gospel.

Our calls were shaped by individual personalities, circumstances and Christian persuasions, but our stories resonated like the very different instruments that make up a grand symphony, in this case, the symphony, one sound, of the Eternal Word, echoing in our hearts and lives. Later, members of the Joint Committee gave 20-minute presentations on each of the four Elements, followed by 30 minutes of small group discussions. Later, we tried to pull it all together in the large group. Presenters were Fred Ball, OEF (Baptism and Vocation); Anne Mulqueen, SFO (Charism); Ed Shirley, SFO (Christocentric Dimension); and Masud Ibn Syeduliah, TSSF (Prophetic Voice).

One thing that struck us was how much the four elements overlapped. It was as though they were four names of the same reality: the call and charism, rooted in our baptism, to see Christ in all creatures, and to live out the consequences of that reality. In the evenings, we gathered together, shared snacks and drinks, conversation, and had sing-alongs, all of which prepared us for an agapé celebration Saturday morning, before we left our cave and returned to the streets of our lives.

This truly was an ecumenical chapter of mats: we came together as brothers and sisters, and we left immersed in, and transformed by, the experience of siblinghood. We *knew* it to be true.

The second gathering this summer was the annual chapter of the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans (OEF). As with our national meetings, representatives from the other two orders represented on the Joint Committee are invited as observers (and though we have no vote, we are encouraged to participate in every discussion; they want our perspectives). I was the SFO representative. I've been to so many of their gatherings, I think they have to remind themselves that I'm not a professed OEF! The OEF has postulants, novices and professed from many different Christian Churches, from Baptist to Episcopal, from Quaker to Catholic, & everything in between. Their General Rule sounds very familiar to SFO's, because they drew from both the Anglican Rule and our Rule to write their own (and, in fact, I've heard that some Anglican Franciscans actually had input when our Rule was written: isn't our God strange, wonderful and full of surprises?)

Since the OEF is so small and scattered, every member may take part in the annual meeting, which is both a chapter (*like our October NAFRA meeting*), conducting business, and a convocation (*like our Quinquennial*), for formation and fellowship.

Every day, we would switch from chapter to convocation mode and back again. Every day had Morning, Evening and Night Prayer (they do various styles. One service was Quaker style, sitting and waiting for God to speak to our hearts, then sharing those “stirrings.” I could only think how occasionally praying like this could enhance our own SFO gatherings. Every day, there was a Eucharistic celebration, drawing again from their respective traditions (their Rule, like ours, instructs them to participation in the sacramental life of their respective Churches).

And, of course, no Franciscan gathering would be complete without the social times. One night, we had a Holy Hootenanny. Picture an SFO (me) on banjo, the provincial minister of the Anglican Franciscans on harmonica, and an OEF from NY (*originally from the Caribbean*) on a djembe—Caribbean drum. And for additional rhythm, an OEF on spoons.

This has been a very busy, but very fulfilling summer, and there is more to come. It is my hope that these types of experience will radiate outward to our entire orders. Not only do I look forward to similar gatherings in the future, but I also fervently hope that this experience will be manifested on increasingly local levels, as well. This is, after all, where the rubber meets the road. If Franciscans can come together as brothers and sisters, then, perhaps, the Church as a whole, and beyond that, the world.

Our National Vice Minister and Sister Doe

SUBMITTED by VICKIE KLICK, SFO



I was fortunate to be in the Seattle area on business and spent a day with our National Vice-Minister, Elaine Hedtke, SFO. As we were finishing a picnic lunch at Hurricane Ridge in Olympic National Park (essentially Elaine's back yard), I took the attached photo. If one picture is worth a thousand words, you'll have to decide what this one is worth! It certainly entertained us.

Garden Statue

by JOHN ROBERT MCCRAY, SFO
MOST HOLY EUCHARIST FRATERNITY
INDEPENDENCE, MO

How content are you
as a garden statue?

You know, don't you, some now ignore you
with the same fervor they promised to adore you?

Sure, they remember your name.
but the remembering isn't the same

Recalling stories about your spiritual powers
means no more to them than spending one's free hours
skipping through fields gathering flowers.

After a while, you smile
and ask if I'd made much time to pray today.

GOD KNOWS

by BETTIE ONORATO, SFO
LITTLE FLOWER FRATERNITY

For every pain that we must bear,
For every burden, every care,
there's a reason.
For every grief that bows our head,
For every tear drop that we shed,
there's a reason.
For every hurt, for every plight,
For every lonely pain racked night,
there's a reason.
But, if we trust in God
as we should,
All will work out for our good,
He knows the reason.

WALK WITH FRANCIS

by BETTIE ONORATO, SFO
LITTLE FLOWER FRATERNITY

Walk with Francis, hand in hand.
Walk with Francis and you'll understand
the Christ like love that he displays,
as he brings peace to all each day.

When Francis was broken he found a new love,
as God's Spirit touched him from above.
He heard Jesus speak and made a stand,
to change the heart of every man.

Walk with Francis in humility,
And when you do you will see...
the poor, the unloved and those left behind,
And as you witness their faces will shine.

The healing love that you will bring
will also refresh your soul within
Walk with Jesus the Franciscan way,
and peace will radiate from you each day.



by **STEPHANIE SORMANE, SFO**
stefsfo@sbcglobal.net

The main focus of the FAN meetings was to strategize about our future.

FAN UPDATE AND THE LORETTO WORKSHOP

As you may know, the Franciscan Action Commission (FAN) has a monthly conference call and meets face-to-face twice a year, in March and in the fall, usually in Washington, DC. Our March meeting is always planned to coincide with Ecumenical Advocacy Days (EAD). The EAD workshops focus on a particular issue (this year immigration), giving us the opportunity to learn more about the issue so we can speak intelligently with our representatives on the Hill, whom we visit on the last day of EAD.

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This year's EAD also coincided with the Immigration Rally in Washington on Sunday, March 21. Many of us went down to the Mall for the Rally. I was shocked at the media coverage, even in Washington.

It was given, at the most, 30 seconds on the news, saying that "thousands" were demonstrating at the Mall. That was a true statement — but misleading, because one would probably think 5,000, maybe 10,000. In fact, there were 200,000 at the Mall, the largest demonstration for immigration ever, but that was never mentioned.

The experience on the Mall was unsettling. The stories told were disturbing, the anger of the people, while righteous, was also frightening. The U.S. Council of Catholic Bishops has spoken strongly in favor of comprehensive immigration reform. This problem is not going away until it's resolved.

One of the problems (*and one especially within the SFO*) is too few representatives covering too large areas. Action Circles were suggested, each made up of representatives in sections of the country. It would increase representation on the Action Commission and also give Action Commissioners a small group to work with in educating our various Franciscan communities and Franciscan-minded individuals of FAN's work and how they can participate. This is in the works and will be implemented soon.

Another activity coming out of the March meeting was a plan for civic engagement training. Called "Ours to Do," the purpose of this training is to enable grass roots efforts to participate in FAN's local and national justice, peace and care for creation efforts. Workshops will be held in three cities: Chicago, Philadelphia area and Colorado Springs in August and September. Participants will be trained to become advocates in their areas, and to teach others to become advocates, promoting Franciscan values in the public arena.

As a preview of "Ours to Do," a webinar entitled "Civility in Public Discourse" was presented on June 17, which is currently on the FAN website for viewing. Do not miss watching this webinar (*it's one hour in length*); it is very worth your time! After watching the webinar, you're invited to make the *F.R.A.N.C.I.S. Commitment*

to Civility in Public Discourse, and to send an email (or letter) to those running for election to do the same. That commitment is to:

- **F**acilitate a forum for difficult discourse and acknowledge that all dialogue can lead to new insight and mutual understanding.
- **R**espect the dignity of all people, especially the dignity of those who hold an opposing view.
- **A**udit myself and utilize terms or a vocabulary of faith to unite or reconcile rather than divide conflicting positions.
- **N**eutralize inflamed conversations by presuming that those with whom we differ are acting in good faith.
- **C**ollaborate with others and recognize that all human engagement is an opportunity to promote peace.
- **I**dentify common ground such as similar values or concerns and utilize this as a foundation to build upon.
- **S**upport efforts to clean up the provocative language by calling policymakers to their sense of personal integrity.

Other information on the FAN web site that you should check out at: www.franciscanaction.org includes:

- A letter sent to President Obama regarding immigration reform, signed by nearly 50 Franciscan communities and organizations.
- Responses to the Gulf oil disaster, including prayers that can be used at community gatherings — or within the Prayers of the Faithful at your parish.



Quinquennial XVIII

DATE: JULY 3-8, 2012 PLACE: CHICAGO, IL

Budding Creative Designers Take Note:

Start warming up the ole thinking caps, and let your creative juices start flowing...

The Quinquennial (Q) 2012 planning committee will soon be launching a national contest for the "Q" 2012 art/logo.

Look for further details in the upcoming issues of *TAU-USA*.

(Continued from page 18)

- FAN's accomplishments in the first quarter of 2010 (Spring Highlights).
- Various White Papers, including the latest by Fr. Joe Nangle, OFM on Mission.

FAN, of course, was not the sponsor of the SFO Workshop at Loretto, PA in June. St. Francis University was. However, Fr. Joe Nangle, OFM, Secretary-Treasurer of the FAN's Board of Directors, was one of the presenters, the other being Pat Brandwein-Ball, the immediate past-JPIC Councilor of NAFRA.

Here's a quick summary of the workshop which was, in my opinion, simply excellent:

- Fr. Joe gave us a history of Catholic social teaching, not only the documents that have come down over the past 120 years, but also how changing times and needs were graces by which the Holy Spirit engages us to live the Gospel and care for our brothers and sisters.

- Both Pat and Fr. Joe spoke about the spirituality of social justice. It is a response to our faith, not an obligation to be fulfilled.

- Pat reviewed Chapter 2 of our Rule, telling us to look for the verbs to understand how to live the Rule.

- Pat facilitated a discussion regarding the transition from apostolic commissions to JPIC, explaining that we are called to continue to work in apostolic activities, but the motivation must flow from our living the Rule rather than taking on a project. She also explained that the acronym "JPIC" was the new term for us for apostolic work mainly because it is the term used by the rest of the Franciscan family and as we work more and more together, it's well to use the same terminology.

- Pat introduced the mission statement for JPIC which has been approved by NAFRA:

The mission of JPIC is to assist Professed Secular Franciscans as they reflect on their relationship with God as manifested in the fruits of conversion in their lives. This with special regard to the daily choices made in the areas of justice, peacemaking and respect for all created things and people; as brothers and sisters of penance, bringing life to the Gospel and the Gospel to life.

- Pat mentioned that she was stepping down as JPIC Councilor as of June 30, 2010. NAFRA has since announced that Kent Ferris, SFO, will succeed Pat.

(See page 21 to "meet" newly appointed National JPIC Chair, Kent Ferris, SFO)

- The workshop in 2011 will focus on "Aspects of Fraternity Life" with presenters Fr. Lester Bach, OFM Cap and Mary Bittner, SFO.



INSTRUMENTS OF PEACE

“Mindful that they are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly, they should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon.”¹

As Secular Franciscans, we talk a lot about peace. We aspire to it, we pray for it (Francis’ Peace Prayer) and we work for it in our apostolate and for social justice. However, I think we frequently miss it. We are so busy “do-ing” peace that we miss “be-ing” peace!

Let’s take a closer look at what our Rule says we should do. It says that we are “bearers of peace” and that we should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue. In other words, we try to effect a reconciliation and healing in our work with others. But, how many times do our efforts end in failure and frustration? How many times do we get caught up in the anger, recriminations, and blame?

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In order to be an instrument of peace, we need to “be” at peace first, which is not just an absence of interior discord.

How can we “become peace” and how can we stay in that peace during negotiations or even when we are attacked?

Our Rule says that we need “to let prayer and contemplation be the soul of all [we] are and do.”² How much time do we spend in contemplation before entering into a conflicted situation?

Can we sustain the peace of contemplation in our dealings with others? Can we stand back, see as God sees, become the peace of God, and not let ourselves and our own attitudes get sucked into the situation?

As you are aware, contemplation changes us. As God enters into our lives more, He becomes greater and we become lesser. He takes over. As in the words of the song it is “No longer I, but Christ who lives within me.”³

Richard Rohr, OFM, identifies this as the “Indwelling of the Holy Spirit which is realized by surrender and trust of a divine union which is already given.”⁴ Christ takes over the negotiations for peace and we become bystanders. We begin to look at the situation with the mind of God and not take things personally. It is His work, not ours! Therefore, we are not committed to a specific resolution. God is present in the situation, and it is His love that transforms, reconciles and pardons.

Contemplation also brings us to a place where we do not prejudge – for we have experienced the mercy of God for our own sins. As our father Francis puts it: “we should be firmly convinced that nothing belongs to us except [our] vices and sins”⁵; everything else is God’s. Our mind is freed to see as God sees...to see even our enemies as a beloved child of God. In the words of our Rule, we are able to “trust in the presence of the divine seed in everyone.” Everything is no longer black or white. It is the love of God which transforms.

It has been said that all peace is relational.

Peace is made between individuals.

There can be no peace when there is injustice between people.

There can be no peace when arrogance exists or attitudes of “I know better than you” are present.

Peace comes when mutual respect and love exist and when understanding and compassion overrule anger and hatred... God’s peace heals and reconciles.

Practically speaking, however, seeking unity through fraternal dialogue is never easy. It tries our soul and challenges us to conform to Christ. Didn’t Francis say: “Our friends, then, are all those who unjustly afflict upon us trials and ordeals, shame and injuries, sorrows and torments, martyrdom and death; we must love them greatly for we will possess eternal life because of what they bring us?”⁶

JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION UPDATE

by KENT FERRIS, SFO

JPIC CHAIR

kentferris45@yahoo.com

(Continued from page 20)

There is an exercise which I use to help me realize the divine seed in everyone. When faced with discord with another, I intensify my prayer life.

I throw myself at the feet of God and ask Him for the grace to forgive and to be freed from feelings of anger and resentment. I then imagine God holding the other in His embrace, loving him and caring for him. I think of the good qualities of the other person and I am reminded that indeed, that person is beloved by God just as I am. I pray that I can see with the eyes of God, instead of my own. With prayer, my relationships improve because my attitude has changed. God transforms through His love and pardon.

God's wisdom surely is the wisdom of St. Francis' Peace Prayer: for it is by dying (to self) that we are born to eternal life (unity with Him)!

REFERENCES:

- 1 SFO Rule, 2 #17
- 2 SFO Rule, 2 #8
- 3 Music & text, Bob Hurt, *"No Longer I"* 1990.
- 4 Richard Rohr, OFM, *The Naked Now: Learning to See as the Mystics See* New York Crossroad, 2009, 138.
- 5 Early Rule, Ch. XVII, 7
- 6 Early Rule Ch. XXII, 3-4

Hi! My name is Kent Ferris.

I am a Secular Franciscan from Blessed John XXIII fraternity of Rock Island, Illinois in the Franciscans of the Prairie Region and I am the newly appointed Chair for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation. My wife, Lori, and I have been Secular Franciscans for almost 20 years having previously been part of the St. Augustine's Fraternity in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and St. Crispin of Viterbo in St. Paul, Minnesota. We now live in Muscatine, Iowa, with our three children, Clare-11, Miles-7, and Lucille-6. I am employed as the Director of Social Action and Catholic Charities for the Diocese of Davenport.

All of 15 days have elapsed since I was informed of my JPIC chairperson appointment. In that time, I've looked back at notes from my initial formation instructors, Miss June Weber and Mr. Frank Conflenti back in Pittsburgh. (*"Yes, Miss June, I have a strong feeling for the Franciscan Spirit as revealed in the Secular Franciscan Rule and have a sense of being called by God to this way of life."*)

I've followed the recommendation of Pat Brandwein-Ball and have begun re-reading the Peace and Justice and JPIC Tau columns written first by Dan and Sarah Mulholland, then Carolyn Colburn and most recently Pat.

(Pat, I appreciate the work you completed particularly your writing describing the differences by the former Apostolic Commission model and the JPIC model, and your Being and Doing instruction.)

And this past weekend, I had the opportunity to visit with and learn from the NAFRA National Executive Council as they met in Washington DC.

("Tom, I will strive to cast the net deep as I draw from my own lived Franciscan experience as I help guide JPIC efforts.")

Between now and the Annual National Fraternity Gathering in October, I will introduce myself to JPIC members remaining from the Transition Committee and Regional Ministers. I will also balance JPIC responsibilities with work-related travel to Ethiopia and Tanzania with Catholic Relief Services and prepare to host Father John Dear, SJ, as he receives the *Pacem In Terris* Award in Davenport, Iowa on October 31st.

I am so blessed to be afforded all of these opportunities! I promise the members of our local, regional and national fraternity that I will be humbly and joyfully faithful to our calling to address the work that is contained within Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation!

Pax et Bonum!
Kent

CONGRATULATIONS AND WELCOME NEWLY APPOINTED/COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

National JPIC Chair – Kent Ferris, SFO, Davenport, IA, ferris@davenportdiocese.org
 National Editor of TAU-USA – Anna P. Geraci, SFO, Manalapan, NJ, acpg@aol.com

CONGRATULATIONS AND WELCOME NEWLY ELECTED: *(in alphabetical order)*

Joanne Angeletti, SFO, Regional Minister; St. Maxmillian Kolbe Region 70
 Charlotte Collord, SFO, Regional Minister; Ohana O Ke Anuenue Region 50
 Marian Crosby, SFO, Regional Minister; Franciscans of the Prairie Region 63
 Bob Fitzsimmons, SFO, Regional Minister; Troubadours of Peace Region 54
 Joan Geiger, SFO, Regional Minister; Tau Cross Region 79
 Sheri Hafeli, SFO, Regional Minister, Divine Mercy Region 56
 Pat Houghton, SFO, Regional Minister; St. Joan of Arc Region 60
 Vickie Klick, SFO, Regional Minister; Mother Cabrini Region 59
 Cyl Maljan, SFO, Regional Minister; Lady Poverty Region 68
 Josh Molidar, SFO, Regional Minister, Los Tres Compañeros Region 67
 Jerry Rousseau, SFO, Regional Minister, Brothers and Sisters of Saint Francis Region 61
 Sherry Stevenson, SFO, Regional Minister; St. Clare Region 74
 Steve White, SFO, Regional Minister, Holy Trinity Region 64



A NOTE FROM OUR NATIONAL MINISTER, TOM BELLO

By my count, since the NAFRA National Executive Council elections last October, in which only two officers, Dennis Ross as Treasurer, and Anne Mulqueen as International Councilor, were elected to their previous positions, all the rest of us were elected to new positions. Since that time, the new Regional Ministers that have been elected represent nearly one half of NAFRA's 30 regions. *(They are listed above in alphabetical order, please forgive any mistakes or omissions)*

Wow! Thus, we all have a huge job this October to carry on from our most worthy predecessors AND to build a rather new sense of National family among and between us.

Thus, I make three requests: One, for your prayers for the success of our National Gathering. We can only afford to do this once a year; it's our only "official" National Fraternity meeting; please pray that that Holy Spirit will guide us to do what is ours to do.

Two, for every Region to be represented at the National Table. We cannot form family if you are not there. Each Region deserves representation when votes are taken. Please make every effort for the attendance of the Regional Minister or Vice Minister or elected Regional representative.

Three, for your active participation once you are there. Please, if we, you and I, have not met, please introduce yourself to me, and each of us to one another. If we, you and I, have not talked face to face in some time, please let us make time to talk, and each of us with one another.

As Regional Ministers and elected National Executive Council, plus our beloved National Spiritual Assistant on non-election and non-financial matters, we are the current voting members of our National Fraternity. We need to pray, break Bread, share, learn, grow with one another to renew our Secular Franciscan Order in the United States. We need everyone's input, each Region's perspective. I pray for this active participation!

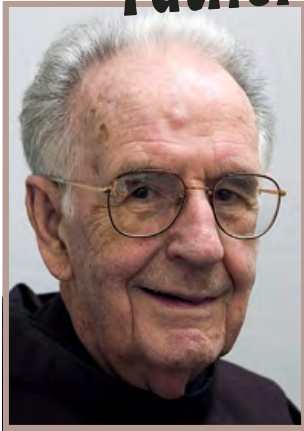
Special advance thanks to Sue Simeone and the Regional Family of St. Thomas More, who have worked hard and will be great hosts.

I'm very excited about this gathering and hope to see many of you there!

Peace and love to all,
 Tom

Father Peter Sheridan, OFM

SUBMITTED by ST. MARY OF THE ANGELS FRATERNITY
MARGARET OF CORTONA REGION 57



Living on M&Ms (Mass and Meals) is how Fr. Peter Sheridan, OFM, describes his daily life at the Holy Name friary and nursing home in Ringwood, New Jersey. The senior friar of Holy Name Province, Fr. Peter turned 97 years old on September 21, 2010. Attributing his longevity to good family genes and dumb luck, Fr. Peter explained, "I didn't know the time was passing by!"

Peter Sheridan was born in Newark, NJ, the son of a mounted policeman who kept his horse at home and gave rides to the neighborhood kids at lunchtime.

As a youth, his activities included people-watching from the front porch and waiting outside the Yankee farm club field to catch foul balls, having no money to attend the games. He also attended the early Sunday morning service known as "the Printers Mass," at the St. Anthony Shrine Church. Three years after graduating from high school he entered the formation program of Holy Name Province of the Order of Friars Minor, making a temporary profession of vows in 1935 and final solemn profession in 1938. On June 9, 1941, he was ordained to the Order of Priesthood.

This year Fr. Peter celebrates his 75th anniversary as a professed Franciscan Friar, and his 69th anniversary as a priest of the Church—a special gift of God.

Fr. Peter has himself been a special gift of the Church in various ministries. Early on, he was the pastor of small parishes in Lenoir, NC and Thomasville, Georgia—a ministry he loved and cherished—along with fishing for bass in the local lakes. He served as a "circuit" priest, visiting the few Catholics who lived in the South at that time.

One of the original ecumenical Friars, he arranged to have joint Catholic-Baptist religious events, observing that although Protestants did not put much emphasis on the role of Mary in their religious worship, after becoming involved with Catholics, they recognized and understood our devotion to the Virgin. He occasionally used the front office of a poultry operation as a chapel for Sunday services, causing parishioners to joke about coming to Mass to see him "lay an egg."

Then from out of the blue came the obedience to be the Novice Master of the Province. In that job Fr. Peter was a major influence and blessing in the lives of over 250 young friars during a nine year period.

After serving a term on the Provincial Council of the Holy Name Province, he returned to the South to become pastor at St. Mary's Church in Americus, Georgia, near the little country town of Plains, GA, the birthplace of Jimmy Carter. Fr. Peter was later fond of saying that,

"The President of the United States is one of my devout Baptist parishioners."

In fact, he did have the pleasure of playing poker with the then-governor's mother, Lillian Carter (*famous for joining the Peace Corps at the age of 68*).

Fr. Peter moved to the Washington, DC area in the 1980's, where he served as associate pastor at St. Camillus. As his golden years beckoned, he moved next door to Holy Name College, living in community with young friars-in-formation.

He has said that, in some ways, this was his most important ministry—a sign to young friars that it was possible to grow old gracefully and cheerfully in the Franciscan way-of-life, with enormous gratitude for having been called to that life by God. In semi-retirement, Fr. Peter was the Spiritual Assistant to two large secular fraternities near DC: the former Assumption fraternity, and St. Mary of the Angels.

As a member of the Franciscan Community at Holy Name friary in Ringwood, he is still a prayerful, fraternal presence to all who have the privilege to know him.

Fr. Peter is the prime example of a Friar: a religious man of the people. He understands us and has the ability to influence us.

FR. MATTHEW L. GASKIN, OFM, 88 years of age, a professed Franciscan friar for 64 years, died on Saturday, June 5, 2010, at Holy Name Friary in Ringwood, NJ. He would have celebrated the 60th anniversary of his ordination on June 13.

Fr. Matthew was born November 20, 1921, in Buffalo, NY, to Edward and Irene Gaskin. On December 11 he was baptized Edward George at St. Gerard Church in Buffalo.

He was received into the Order of Friars Minor in Holy Name Province on August 12, 1944, at St. Bonaventure Friary in Paterson, NJ, receiving the name Matthew Lawrence. He professed his first vows there on August 14, 1945, then pursued the usual two-year course of studies in philosophy, receiving his B.A. from St. Bonaventure University in 1947. He studied theology at Holy Name College in Washington, D.C., where he professed his final vows on September 17, 1948. He was ordained to the priesthood on June 11, 1950, by Archbishop Amleto Cicognani, Apostolic Delegate to the United States, in the Chapel of Trinity College in Washington, D.C. Upon completion of his studies at Holy Name College in 1951, Fr Gaskin was assigned to the Pontifical Anthonian Athenaeum in Rome, receiving his Licentiate in Sacred Theology.

In 1982 he began his long association with the Secular Franciscan Order. In 1984, he was named Provincial Spiritual Assistant to the SFO of Holy Name Province. Residing in Buffalo until 1986; moved to St. Francis Friary in NYC; then to St. Anthony Friary in Butler, NJ, in 1987, which remained his home for the next 17 years.

Fr. Matt continued as Provincial Spiritual Assistant until 2001. From 1993-99, he served as the National Spiritual Assistant, and as Spiritual Assistant to the National Formation Commission, as well as the National Peace and Justice Commission. He served in this role during a crucial period during the life of the Secular Franciscans in the United States, as they moved from a traditional structure under the oversight of the First Order provinces to national regionalization. Fr. Matt provided crucial leadership during this process and was named the Regional Spiritual Assistant to the Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity. He retired from active ministry in Butler in 2002, but due to failing health, took up residence at Holy Name Friary in Ringwood, in 2004.



1921—2010

Upon Father Matthew's death, tributes and stories came pouring in. Here are but a few honoring this special man whom many of us were blessed and privileged to know. May he rest in the peace of God.

—Editor

RON PIHOKKER, SFO

"He loved and dedicated much of his ministry to the SFO. Father Matt was a sought after speaker and retreat master, a gifted writer and was very passionate about his dedication to the SFO. In recent years, Father Matt suffered from Parkinson's Disease and resided at the Friars' Infirmary—St. Francis Friary in Ringwood, NJ. He was a very dear friend and brother—like a second father to me; his passing will leave a big hole in our hearts. I am very happy to say that my wife, Jody, and I along with Dick Morton, SFO, former National Minister, had visited with Father Matt the previous afternoon. It was a great privilege to have spent some time with him just before his death. We brought him a chocolate milkshake which he enjoyed with a flourish. We were with him until 5:30pm. He went to sleep at 8:00pm and when the nurses checked on him at 10:00pm he was gone. A peaceful death. Praise God for the gift of Fr. Matt!"

FR. BOB BRADY, OFM

"Fr. Matt was so dearly loved and thought of by Franciscans across our country. May this thought be of consolation to all the sisters and brothers who benefited from Fr. Matt's many gifts, most of all for his love and care, as well as his amazing place in the history of our National Fraternity, through his great gift of ministry to each one of us! We have much to be grateful to God for in this wonderful, loving and giving friar! May Christ welcome him into His loving arms!"

MARIE AMORE, SFO

"I remember Fr. Matt with such admiration and love. He was so dedicated to the SFO, and to all those who served it. He taught me many lessons. I thank God for Matt's life and spirit. May he pray for us as he spends his life after life with God."

KAY PELLETIER, SFO

"What a wonderful gift Fr. Matt was to the SFO, and to the Franciscan Family. It was a privilege to have known him and worked with him over the years. May he be resting in peace and rejoicing with Francis and Clare in the heavenly kingdom."

BILL WICKS, SFO

"We lost a good friend. He gave us much. His legacy will live on."

With great sorrow the Friars of the ABVM Province announced the death of their brother, the **MOST REV. BASIL SCHOTT, OFM**, Metropolitan Archbishop of the Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy of Pittsburgh. On June 10, 2010, Metropolitan Archbishop Basil fell asleep in the Lord following a seven-month battle with cancer.

Archbishop Basil was born on July 21, 1939, in Freeland, PA. He entered the Novitiate of the Byzantine Franciscans on August 3, 1958. He was ordained to the priesthood on August 29, 1965 by Bishop Stephen Kocisko. On July 11, 1996, he was ordained Bishop of Parma, Ohio, and on July 9, 2002, he was enthroned as the fourth chief shepherd of the Byzantine Catholic Church of Pittsburgh.



Bill Wicks, SFO, shared that many will remember Archbishop Schott when he presided at the celebration of the beautiful Byzantine Rite Mass at the 2007 Quinquennial Congress, and some will remember the time when as members of the NAFRA Council, they participated in Mass at his beautiful Church in Pittsburgh in 1998. “From my perspective, he was a gentle and welcoming Franciscan brother.”

“By the grace of God, I am a Christian; by my actions a sinner; by my calling a pilgrim traveling from here to there. In my knapsack is the Bible and a few crumbs of bread. That is all.”

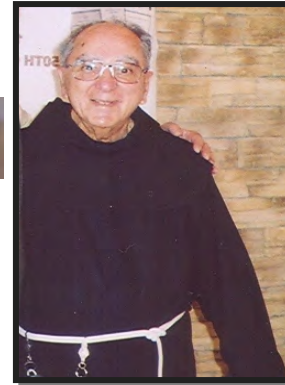
From Archbishop Basil’s homily at the Liturgy of his enthronement.



Beloved **MOTHER of CIOFS Minister General, Encarnacion del Pozo, OFS,**

died peacefully at 6:30 on August 13, 2010, surrounded by all her children. Encarnita shared how her mother had accepted her long time death with serenity and strength, and asked that we keep her mother and the entire family in our prayers.

FR. THOMAS M. NICASTRO, OFM (1916—2010)



Dearly loved former pastor at Saint Anthony of Padua Church in NYC, entered into eternal rest on July 13, 2010.

Fr. Tom arrived at Mt. Alvernia,

Wappingers Falls, NY, in 1967 where he served as Director of Retreats and Spiritual Assistant of the Secular Franciscan Order. It was in this ministry that Fr. Tom displayed the depth of his talents as a spiritual leader both to those who came to Mt. Alvernia as well as the people in the surrounding communities. To further strengthen his ministerial abilities, Fr. Tom took time out of his busy schedule and commuted to Iona College in New Rochelle, NY, for three years earning a Master of Science Degree in Counseling.

After 37 years of devoted and caring ministry at Mt. Alvernia, Fr. Tom retired at St. Anthony Friary, Catskill, NY, in September 2004 to continue to thank God for helping him “to fulfill successfully his ambition and dream of being a good and prayerful friar, and a good and caring priest for all peoples—no matter what ministry he was involved in”.

TOM BELLO, SFO

“I remember him as a good, gentle and intelligent friar with a true love for us Seculars. I’m sorry for the loss we are feeling now, but later when we share the stories and remember the memories, Father Matt will live much longer than this current sadness. May the angels sing him to his rest, and may all the Franciscan saints welcome him home”.

JAN PARKER, SFO

“I have very fond memories of Fr. Matt. When I was such a newbie as Director of Formation for my province (in 1990, before regionalization), I attended a Formation Workshop in Denver. This “eye-opening” workshop was conducted by Fr. Matt and Ron Pihokker — they “formed” me as a Formation Director. They were wonderful”.

FR. RICHARD TREZZA, OFM

“Matt had a passion for the SFO and knew that it could be more than it was. For that reason, he rejoiced in the Rule of 1978 and, searching for a better way for it to be lived out, brought to maturity the idea of the Apostolic Commissions. He jumped enthusiastically into his ministry of making the SFO better known to the friars and encouraged me personally to get involved on the Regional and National levels. I was happy to follow him as SA to the Formation Commission and was able to assist in furthering his vision of Gospel to Life and Life to Gospel while serving as SA to the National Commission Chairs. It has been a pleasure to succeed him as Provincial SA for Holy Name Province.

As a group of brothers, we in Holy Name Province will miss him because among his other ministerial accomplishments, he was just a good friar who loved the fraternity, the Order and the Church. He always referred to himself as a “true son of the Council (Vatican II)” and as far as I am concerned, was always disposed to be of assistance to the Church and the Order. He will be missed. May he rest in the peace of Christ”!

SECULAR FRANCISCANS CELEBRATE 150 YEARS IN UTICA, NY AND HONOR 2 AGENCIES SERVING THE POOR AND MARGINALIZED

by **BOB AND MARY STRONACH, SFO**

Bl. Kateri Tekakwitha Region's St. Joseph Fraternity celebrated 150 years in Utica, NY on Sunday, June 6, and marked the occasion by honoring two agencies that serve the poor and marginalized: Mother Marianne's West Side Kitchen and the Rescue Mission of Utica. Fraternity Minister Katie Koscinski, SFO, presented them with the fraternity's inaugural Mother Marianne Cope Award.

"This is bittersweet," said Rev. Deacon Gil Nadeau, director of West Side Kitchen, because "we just lost one of our volunteers," Tony Weber, who died May 28 at the age of 87. Tony came to the soup kitchen Wednesday nights, where "he made thousands of sandwiches." "So we dedicate this award to Tony Weber and all the volunteers who never ask for recognition."

Rev. Bill Dodge, executive director of the Rescue Mission (which serves the homeless, the poor, the mentally ill and those recovering from addictions), said he was "awed and humbled" to be accepting an award from Franciscans that is named after Blessed Mother Marianne. He mentioned how Mother Marianne went out of her way to provide amenities to her leprosy patients and treated them with dignity.

The day began with special recognition for the 150th anniversary during Sunday mass at St. Joseph-St. Patrick's Church. Fr. Adam Keltos, OFM Conv., the banquet speaker, concelebrated mass with Fr. Richard Dellos, pastor, who praised the Franciscan fraternity's service and made note of special guests that included Secular Franciscans from around the state and the Rev. Dodge and his wife, Laura.

During the banquet at the Radisson Hotel-Utica Centre, Koscinski noted that the award's namesake grew up in Utica and was active in what today is St. Joseph-St. Patrick Church before becoming a Franciscan sister and reaching out to the marginalized of her day. "What better way to celebrate our century-and-a-half as a Franciscan fraternity than to recognize others who are working in the trenches - exactly where St. Francis, Mother Marianne and Jesus would be."

Father Keltos encouraged Secular Franciscans to study and live their Franciscan Rule of Life. "It's not long," he said. "It's just hard..." because "it means living the Gospel." He urged them to wear the Tau cross all the time as a sign of their Franciscan vocation.

After the banquet, as people lingered and chatted, the Rescue Mission's Rev. Dodge commented to Fraternity Secretary, Marsha Kistner, SFO, that he really admired the Franciscan Tau cross. She removed hers from around her neck and presented it to him. "You have no idea what this means to me." he said.



St. Joseph Fraternity Minister Katie Koscinski, SFO, holds the fraternity's original Book of Life, with entries of members dating back to 1859. The anniversary celebration came at the conclusion of the 150th year.



CONGRATULATIONS TO FR. LESTER BACH, OFM CAP

ON HIS 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF BECOMING A CAPUCHIN FRIAR

Fr. Lester Bach made his first profession in the Capuchin Order in 1950 and was ordained in 1957. He has worked with the formation program with Capuchin Brothers as well as sharing ministry in a parish, worked with the Cursillo and Search programs, and served as chaplain at a county nursing home. He has worked with the Secular Franciscans since the 1960's. He has been director of a retreat center and done retreat work for many years. He served as director of the House of Prayer as well as having served as Provincial formation director for the province of St. Joseph. For several years, he worked with ISAIAH 43 preaching parish missions. He continued that work with Missions 2000.

Fr. Lester serves as Provincial Spiritual Assistant to the Secular Franciscan Order as well as serving on a regional council of the SFO, and represents the Capuchins on the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants (CNSA). He has authored numerous books; several books on SFO Formation and Franciscan spirituality. His new book, *The Franciscan Journey*, is now available. See the inside back cover for purchasing details. **Ad multos annos, Fr. Lester!**

THE DIVINE MERCY REGIONAL FRATERNITY (Region #56) held our Annual Minister's Meeting

August 20-22 at St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center in Detroit. Our theme for the weekend was "Our Vocation in Action". There were 24 fraternities represented and 43 people total.



We were blessed to have one of our Provincial Spiritual Assistants, Brother Juniper Crouch, OFM, with us on Friday and Saturday and Regional Spiritual Assistant Friar Tod Laverty, OFM, with us on Saturday, and

NAFRA Councilor Mary Bittner with us for the whole weekend.

We had a wonder array of guest speakers including Fr. Charles Morris who spoke on "Going Green" and "Your Carbon Footprint" and Sr. Diane and Sr. Laura, two Poor Clare Nuns of Saginaw, who came and gave a presentation on St. Clare and their community.



We were also extremely blessed to have singer-storytellers Br. Al Mascia, OFM and Maggid Steve Klapper of *Song and Spirit*, who refer to themselves as "A Franciscan minstrel and a Jewish troubadour, working together to bring peace to the world, one song at a time", give us an hour-long taste of their "Spirit of Assisi" Concert Tour. It was truly a Spirit-filled, heart-warming experience for everyone there!

FIVE FRANCISCAN MARTYRS (Region # 51) held their Regional Annual Meeting May 28-30.



It was a terrific meeting! I'd like to thank all who attended, but most especially those who organized it, for making it so. And it was great seeing many of you, again! Images now on line. See more photos at: <http://www.franciscan-sfo.org/FFMR/images/2010FFMR.html>

OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS REGIONAL FRATERNITY (Region # 77) held their Annual Regional Retreat on August 27-29 at the beautiful Mount Alvernia Retreat House in Wappingers Falls, NY. This year's retreat was a double treat. We offered the Regional Retreat for all professed members under the leadership of Fr. Robert Williams, OFM Cap, our Regional Spiritual Assistant from Stigmata Province. In addition, a separate "track" was offered specifically for our Candidates in Initial Formation, led by Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM, Regional and Provincial Spiritual Assistant from Holy Name Province, on the theme of Commitment.

This enabled us all to be together at the same time and place, sharing meals, recreation, prayer and worship while allowing for two completely separate sets of input talks and experiences geared to the participants whether candidates or professed. The double retreat proved to be very well accepted and we were completely sold out. A great time was had by all. See more photos at: <http://olangels.tripod.com/index.html>





CIOFS “FORMING THE FORMATORS”

—PART 3

by **BOB FITZSIMMONS, SFO**
NATIONAL FORMATION CHAIR
nfcnafra@verizon.net

PICKING UP WHERE WE LEFT OFF LAST TIME, I want to finish up the CIOFS comments and ideas of this new “formation project” and then provide you with some updates of where we are.

The goal of our forthcoming National Formation Workshops is to present selected sessions from the Formators Manual, so we can offer **you the necessary elements of Christian doctrine and of Franciscan and secular spirituality** which will allow all Secular Franciscans to understand what means to be a Christian, a Franciscan and a members of a lay and secular Order of the Church, who have made a perpetual Profession (a true form of consecration), fully aware of their mission and capable of accomplishing it in the Church and in the world.

CIOFS TEXT FOLLOWS:

Much too often, we have in our Fraternities “pious” brothers and sisters who are not at all familiar with Sacred Scriptures. Too many of our brothers and sisters have foggy ideas on the Magisterium of the Church. The brothers and the sisters who have a true command of clear, precise and well defined Christian doctrine are very rare.

We are not trying to say that Secular Franciscans have to be professors of theology, however, it is essential that Secular Franciscans are sufficiently prepared be faithful interpreters of the Church mission, at the forefront of its apostolic action (as members of a Public Association of Faithful we receive a mission in *Nomine Ecclesiae*, in the name of the Church). It is, therefore, essential that all the elements of formation which our brothers and sisters have to receive be **clear, exact, comprehensive** and, at the very least, **sufficient**, though necessarily concise.

Much too often have we heard the objection that the characterizing features of Franciscanism are simplicity, humility ... but these affirmations need to be qualified and, in any case, these Franciscan characteristics must not be confused with the ignorance of our Faith and of Revelation!

Saint Francis was not a theologian; he was simple, humble and used to define himself “idiot”, but ... what a profound understanding he had of Faith and of theology !!!

THIS IS THE MODEL WE HAVE TO FOLLOW !

The National and Regional Formators will have to receive a theological and doctrinal formation well above the average and will have to be able to wisely adapt and choose, together with the local formators, what is needed and what can be proposed to the brothers and sisters in the regional and local Fraternities.

Obviously as we move toward the local levels, where the Order concretely lives, only the brothers and the sisters who are responsible for the local formation, together with their local spiritual assistants, will be in a position to evaluate the quality of the vocation of a specific person, of his/her dedication, personal commitment, and of all those other elements which may often be more important than the formal doctrinal preparation itself.

In any case, **we must do everything possible so as to raise the level and the quality of local formation, both spiritual and doctrinal**, reaching each and every brother and sister of each Fraternity of the Order in the whole world.

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I hope you can all see that the intention of CIOFS is to end the days of “just doing what we want” and calling that formation. As a true Order within the Church we are moving towards a more complete formation plan, that will identify those elements essential to build an understanding our vocation and profession into the Secular Franciscan Order. Our Franciscan charism is a beautiful expression of our concept of the nature of God as Lover and not as judge. The plan that is being unfolded is aimed to specifically give to our Formators the tools they need both for their own formation, and those elements that NEED to be at the core of all the fraternities’ actions throughout all phases of Formation.

It is our hope that once the Formators experience the workshops (school if you will) that they can work with their local Formation Directors to develop formation plans or guides that work for their specific regions and still includes all the essential elements.

(Continued on page 29)

(Continued from page 28)

SO WHAT DO YOU NEED TO BEGIN DOING NOW?

Saving and budgeting for your region Formation Director and/or formation team so you have a presence at the first workshop: we are asking for at least two from every region and if there are additional places open we can entertain more as desired.

MAY 12-15, 2011

**AT THE SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF THE SNOWS
BELLEVILLE, IL**

Here are some of the topics that are considered fundamental to our formation process, and in which there will need to be some level of understanding before a person professes into our Order:

Possible orientation topics: The Creed of the Catholic Church, Ecclesiology of the Laity, The Franciscan Movement, Basic Catholic Doctrine.

Inquiry topics: What is Formation, Franciscan Movement part 2, Basic Catholic Doctrine, Our Vocation, Nature of the SFO, Identity of the Secular Franciscan, Charism & Mission in the Church, discussion based on a bio of St. Francis

Candidacy topics: Our Rule, JPIC, Conversion & Penance, Fraternity, Francis' approach to God/Franciscan Tradition, Our Blessed Mother, St Clare, Understanding our Profession, History of SFO, FYYA, Study Guides for the General Constitutions & Our National Statutes, Franciscan Saints with emphasis on SFO.

Many of these topics will make up the core of the Formators manual, while several will be future materials posted on the National Formation Commission website for free download.

Selected topics from the above list will also form the basis of the workshop presentations, and will be available in the initial Formators Manual. These topics are stand alone so each fraternity can structure their own program and sequence of presentations based on the people they have in formation and their specific needs.

That said, we are on track to present this to the National Chapter this October and to prepare for the 2011 Workshop.

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All articles for our next issue must be received by:

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