

TAU- USA



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

News letter

We must rise up and value every instant of time that passes and is in our power. We must not waste a single moment. By divine grace we find ourselves at the beginning of a new year. This year, which only God knows if we shall see its end, must be used in reparation for the past and in preparation for the future.

—St. Pio of Pietrelcina

Dear brothers and sisters in St. Francis,

When we read the above quote by St. Padre Pio, we probably flinched. I know I did! But we can also use this quote to inspire us to “find what is ours to do”. This isn’t just a new calendar on the wall or a numerical change in the date. It is an opportunity for transformation in how we think and what we can do in order to lead the life of what we were called to do—and trust God with the rest.



Since our last issue, a great many of you wrote me detailing life situations that drag on and on leaving you feeling helpless, hopeless and drained. You were kind enough to share that receiving our newsletter helped you feel connected, and not quite so alone.

Most times it’s very hard to deal with difficult situations, but God does have plans for us. Rather than being solely preoccupied with our own troubles, let’s ask God to help us notice other people’s troubles and to care about what they are going through. When you respond to God’s love, hope floods your soul and flushes out the hopelessness that was there. You go from being a spectator, to one who engages in the world by working to make it a better place.

In our Franciscan family, you are never alone. In this issue of the *TAU-USA*, you’ll find examples of courageous initiatives being taken to help speak up and carry burdens for those who are marginalized in society. You will find how our beloved National Minister, Tom Bello, leads by example and gives us the benefit of his experience. You’ll read of how we build community; actively engage with one another in prayer, in striving to improve communications, and in sharing activities—in both joyful and sorrowful times. You’ll read the dedication and zeal with which the formation education is coming to fruition, and you’ll read of specific challenges being sought, and events taking place, and being planned. For those of you who couldn’t attend our Fall Chapter, or the Canonization of our newest Franciscan Saint, this issue brings the event to you.

So with thoughts of warmer weather, I invite you to come share with us. Wherever you see the spirit of St. Francis at work in the world, in your lives, and in your hearts—let me hear from you.

With thanks and blessings,

Anna

2009—2012

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"Prayer, Formation, Fraternal Sharing and Necessary Business, and in this order!"

Beloved Brothers and Sisters of Penance,

We all know from the Nicene Creed that the four marks of our Church, the Body of Christ, are that the Church is One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. I write this article to remind you that from our SFO Rule, General Constitutions and SFO Ritual, the four marks of a good Secular Franciscan Fraternity, whether at the local, regional, national or international level, are: Prayer, Formation, Fraternal Sharing and Necessary Business.

In the Jubilee Year 2000, our then St. Margaret of Cortona Regional Spiritual Assistant (and later National Spiritual Assistant) Friar Bart Karwacki, OFM Conventual, made a Pastoral Visitation to my local Fraternity, St. Thomas More, meeting at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Arlington, Virginia. Perhaps we were conducting more "business" than we should have, but for whatever reason, Father Bart told us to the effect that, "Business is not the primary concern of a fraternal gathering. Actually, FRATERNITY is your primary business, and I wish to remind you that the four purposes of a fraternal gathering are: Prayer, Formation, Fraternal Sharing and only as much Business as is necessary, and in this order!"

Well, obviously, I've never forgotten the spirit and thrust of his advice, and so I write:

First is Prayer.

We are wasting our own time and each other's time if we are not striving to achieve our own and one another's salvation. Without question, the essential element of "fraternity" is the spiritual; leadership must never sacrifice the spiritual to business.

We should be always helping our brothers and sisters to get to heaven, to get closer to the Lord, and, with God's great grace, to get ourselves to heaven through, with and in our Lord Jesus Christ and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

How can we achieve this without prayer?

We cannot "earn" or "deserve" heaven. This is all God's gift, and to help one another and ourselves, we need prayer: first, last, foremost. Fraternities must nourish a vital prayer life for all their members.

Now, there are many forms of prayer. We have our Liturgy of the Hours; we have our SFO Ritual, available online and officially at:

<http://www.ciofs.org/a9enodoc.htm>

If we have an available friar or priest, we have the highest form of prayer in the Church, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. I am not specifying what form of prayer, nor did Father Bart, but he said to vary the forms of prayer and not become "stuck" in the same "prayer rut" (my words, his thought).

At our October National Gathering at the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, Arizona, we celebrated the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass each day, but with a different priest in different locales, including local Auxiliary Bishop Eduardo Nevares.

Each morning we opened our days with Morning Prayer, but each session was led by different people with different forms of prayer, including the *Liturgy of the Hours* and an original *Liturgy of Creation* by Ed Shirley, our National Ecumenical/Interfaith Chair.

We celebrated a prayerful *Rite of Remembrance* for all of our individual members nationwide who had returned home in the past year.

And we opened and closed our Chapter in prayer from the Ritual and blessings from our National Spiritual Assistant, Brother Bob Brady, OFM.

Second is Formation.

If fraternity itself is our main business, then our main fraternity business, after prayer, must be formation. Good fraternities need solid formation: initial formation, ongoing formation, formation leading to transformation and conversion of heart. Many, many excellent Secular Franciscan materials are available for you. Formation is the business of the whole fraternity.

At our recent National Gathering, each day we had formation, but in different ways.

(Continued on page 3)



THE MINISTER'S MESSAGE is also available in the languages of Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese and Polish.

**These translations may be found online at our NAFRA website:
http://www.nafra-sfo.org/tau-usa/tau_newarticles.html#lbf**

(Continued from page 2)

The first night (Tuesday, October 26), even before our Chapter had officially opened, our 2010 NAFRA Peace Award winner, OFM Brother David Buer spoke to us about his ministry to the homeless, the migrants and the marginalized.

The first official day (Wednesday) we shared our visions and priorities; we heard from our International visitors of their expectations of our national fraternity; and we learned from Dr. Kim Smolik about her great work as Executive Director of Franciscan Mission Service before attending an excellent and dispassionate panel discussion concerning the immigration issue in Arizona particularly.

The next morning (Thursday) we were informed, formed and challenged by Fr. Larry Janezic, OFM, Interim Executive Director of Franciscan Action Network (FAN); Fr. Michael Lasky, OFM Conventual, U.S. Regional Director for Franciscans International (FI); and Alan Ouimet, SFO, Founder and President of Franciscan Family Apostolate (FFA). All of them were excellent speakers about their causes and concerns.

The entire afternoon (Thursday) was directly spent on Formation, specifically, the new Formation Manual to be presented by the National Formation Commission in May.

The formation session transitioned to the day's Holy Sacrifice of the Mass as the celebrant, Father Richard Trezza, OFM, also the Spiritual Director of the Formation Commission, expanded ideas from the afternoon session in his homily.

Yes, good fraternities need solid formation, and solid formation takes time, attention, prayer and planning.

Third is Fraternal Sharing or the purely social aspect of our gatherings.

No fraternity need ever apologize for spending time for socializing or fraternal sharing. In Part II: Prayers for Fraternity Meetings Preface in the SFO Ritual, Number 2 reads:

"The goals of (fraternal) gatherings and meetings are indicated in the Rule, namely, to promote charity among the members and to foster their Franciscan and ecclesial life" (SFO Rule 22,24). Number 4 reads: "The following gatherings of the fraternity are required by statutes: a. a time for getting to know one another as brothers and sisters." Note, the first listed is "a time for getting to know one another as brothers and sisters."

Secular Franciscans should have a good time when they gather! Our recent National Chapter was celebratory as should be your Chapters! We made it our "business" to socialize and have a good time! Every night we gathered, and every meal we socialized. We even spent a day away going to local museums and the beautiful Basilica in downtown Phoenix. We took our "socializing" very seriously!

Of course, Fourth, there is always Business.

Budgets have to be approved. Reports have to be given. Occasionally, bylaws need to be rewritten. Yes, but not first and not only!

At our National Gathering, we approved a budget of over \$200,000.00; we adopted a national statement on migration that received national attention; we amended our National Statutes; we contributed charitably, not from the national budget, to the various organizations who had spoken to us; but most of this necessary "business" was conducted Saturday morning, October 30, the fourth and final full day of our Gathering.

Nationally, for our Chapter, we had the luxury of time because we only meet once a year, but we budgeted our time according to these priorities: Prayer, Formation, Fraternal Sharing and Necessary Business, and in that order! However much time your local or regional fraternity has to gather, please strive to budget your time accordingly. After all, they are not "our" fraternities; they are God's, and if we seek first to spread the kingdom of God, all else will follow!

Peace and love,

Tom

National Prayer For Vocations To The SFO

During our NAFRA Chapter this past October, Franciscans of the Prairie Regional Minister Marian R. Crosby, SFO, was inspired to write a special vocation prayer which the NAFRA Chapter unanimously accepted.

With special thanks to our diligent NAFRA translation teams, we offer you in this issue, our newly adopted **National Prayer for Vocations to the SFO** in five different languages—English, Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, and Polish.

Please cut out or copy the prayer in the language of your choice and place it in your Office, SFO Ritual, Bible, or prayer book and recite the prayer daily. The prayers will also be available online at:

www.nafra-sfo.org/tau-usa/tau_newarticles.html

We ARE Connected

Also during our Chapter, Ed Shirley, SFO, suggested that NAFRA should create an online presence to help us relate to the younger generation.

With special thanks to Randy Heinz, SFO, we are now connected—and have a *Facebook* page to help us promote the Order. You can find our page by going online to: www.facebook.com

You can find our facebook page by entering (in the search box): **Secular Franciscans - Nafra, USA**

Please let all your *Facebook* friends know about our new page.

If you have anything you think should be on our new page, please send it to Randy and he'll post it. He reminds us that we remember this will only succeed if we make it a communal effort and everyone contributes.

Randy may be reached at: randyheinz@gmail.com

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Cruise to the Caribbean

Many years ago, on the West Coast, in the old days of St. Barbara Province, an annual "Week of Community" was held on the years when there was no National Quinquennial. Folks would gather at a Retreat Center from Sunday night until the following Friday, because the members, not just the leaders, would thoroughly enjoy a week of spirituality, fun and fellowship. When the Province split into Regions, the five new regions, and others, took turns hosting the Weeks of Community and invited other Secular Franciscans to come. Some of you may have joined up for trips to Hawaii, Yosemite, the Casa Retreat Center in Scottsdale, Arizona, or at California Mission Retreat Centers such as San Juan Baptista, San Luis Rey, etc. And many still have wonderful and happy memories from these past gatherings.

With special thanks to Diane Halal, SFO, and the Saint Francis Region, another fabulous get-a-way-gathering is planned for November 27 to December 4, 2011, with Father Steve Gross OFM Conv. Working with *CruiseOne* Travel agents, current plans include meeting in Galveston, Texas, where you will embark for a *Cruise to the Caribbean* aboard the beautiful ship, *Mariner of the Seas*, and set sail for a fabulous eight days, seven nights. Everyone is welcome—family, friends, fraternity. "We are trying to keep the price low, and want to let people know early, so they can save the date and save up the money to join us." Rates vary, but only \$250.00 per person will hold your stateroom. If you are interested and want more information, please request a flyer from Diane Halal, SFO at dhalal@juno.com or Mark Furlan at mfurlan@CruiseOne.com

NATIONAL PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS TO THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

O Good and Gracious God,
God of mercy, compassion, generosity,
and love,

As we live our lives today
in the model of St. Francis,
choosing daily to live
the Gospel life,
Help us to help others
hear Your call.

Help us to help others
to recognize their vocation
as a Secular Franciscan
that You have already
planted in their heart.

Help us, so that together
we all may work
to bring the Gospel to life.

Amen!

Marian R. Crosby, SFO
NAFRA Chapter 2010
Scottsdale, AZ

ORACION NACIONAL PARA LAS VOCACIONES
DE LA ORDEN FRANCISCANA SEGLAR

OH, DIOS BONDADOSO Y LLENO DE GRACIA
DIOS DE LA MISERICORDIA, COMPASION,
GENEROSIDAD Y AMOR
AL VIVIR HOY NUESTRAS VIDAS
BAJO EL MODELO DE SAN FRANCISCO
ESCOGIENDO VIVIR DIARIAMENTE
LA VIDA DEL EVANGELIO
AYUDANOS A AYUDAR A OTROS
A ESCUCHAR TU LLAMADO
AYUDANOS A AYUDAR A OTROS
A RECONOCER SU VOCACION
DE FRANCISCANOS SEGLARES
QUE TU YA HAS IMPLANTADO
EN SUS CORAZONES
AYUDANOS PARA QUE TRABAJANDO JUNTOS,
PODAMOS TRAER EL EVANGELIO
A LA REALIDAD DE NUESTRAS VIDAS

SPANISH

AMEN!

재속프란치스코회 성소를 위한 기도

오, 선이시며 은혜로우신 하느님,
자비로우시고,
연민이시며,
너그러우시고,
사랑이신 하느님,

저희가 오늘날 성 프란치스코의 모범을 따라
매일매일 복음적 삶을 살고자 하오니
저희로 하여금 사람들이 당신의 부르심을 알아챌 수 있도록
그들을 돕게 하여 주소서.

당신이 그들의 마음속에 이미 심어주신
재속프란치스코 성소를
그들이 알아챌 수 있도록
저희가 돕게 하여 주소서.

저희 모두 다 함께
복음을 살아갈 수 있도록
저희를 도우소서.

아 멘!

KOREAN

National Prayer For Vocations To The SFO 5

Lời Nguyện Toàn Quốc Cầu Cho Ơn Gọi
Dòng Phan Sinh Tại Thế

Ôi lạy Chúa, là Đấng Tốt Lành đầy Ân Sủng,
Là Thiên Chúa của lòng thương xót, đại lượng,
và yêu thương,
Đương khi chúng con sống theo gương mẫu
của Thánh Phanxicô,
chọn sống Tin Mừng mỗi ngày,
Xin giúp chúng con biết giúp tha nhân lắng nghe
tiếng Chúa.
Xin giúp chúng con biết giúp tha nhân nhận ra ơn
gọi Phan Sinh
Tại Thế mà Chúa đã gieo trồng trong tâm trí của họ.
Xin giúp chúng con biết cùng nhau làm việc
để đem Tin Mừng vào cuộc sống.

Amen!

VIETNAMESE

Narodowa Modlitwa o Powołania do Franciszkańskiego Zakonu
Świeckich

O, dobry i łaskawy Boże,
Boże miłosierdzia, współczucia, hojności i miłości,
Tak jak żyjemy obecnie, dziennie wybierając Życie Ewangeliczne
na wzór św. Franciszka,
Dopomóż nam abyśmy pomagali innym w usłyszaniu Twojego głosu.
Dopomóż nam abyśmy pomagali innym w rozpoznaniu ich powołania do życia
jako Franciszkańców Świeckich, które już posiałeś w ich sercu.
Dopomóż nam abyśmy wszyscy wspólnie mogli działać
dla ożywienia Ewangelii.

POLISH

Amen!

FYYA CHALLENGE

by **ELAINE HEDTKE, SFO**
 INTERIM CHAIR
 FYYA
 (Franciscan Youth and Young Adults)



I had the opportunity to share this message with the National Fraternity in Scottsdale this past October. I thought it might be well to bring it to all of you also. The importance of the need to find that very special person who will rise to the challenge of accepting the appointment as Chair for the FYYA Commission was noted by our National Minister when he opened nominations in July.

“We are ideally looking for a ‘young’ adult who can advise fraternities at all levels on how to attract and motivate young people to the Franciscan charism. Youth Ministry experience would be a big plus.”

In the previous visitation report from our International visitors (2004) the General Minister’s recommendations had this to say about Franciscan Youth:

“It is a road to a vocation that can end, or not, in the SFO. We must work with enthusiasm and conviction — and offer freely to the youth what we freely have received. Let us leave the rest to the Lord.

Try to establish programs and methods that are adequate and suitable to reaching the youth.

When you get involved in the field of youth, it is important that the Councils prepare the Fraternities to welcome them with generosity and an open mind and heart — aware that they will live and express their vocation in a different way according to the necessities of the organization and with the appropriate methodology.

We also exhort you to begin in the field of the children as well.”

This is where you come in... We know from what your regional ministers have shared with us that some of you have very active youth groups in your regions. We know through your responses to our requests for information on how your members “Celebrated Youth” in your regions during this past year that many of you have some very imaginative folks out there “mixing it up” with young people.

We need you to actively look for possible candidates or possibly become a candidate yourself for this important appointment. I know someone is out there. We need to find them.

On a somewhat different topic, Kathy Taromina, SFO, has again graciously agreed to coordinate the Lenten H₂O project for 2011. See page 7 for details. I encourage all to participate as you are able. Let the Holy Spirit be your guide!



THE SFO—FRANCISCAN YOUTH/YOUNG ADULTS LENTEN PROJECT 2011



THE PROBLEM:

Women and children walk 2 hours each way to fetch water (hauling dirty water back to their families).

They have no time or energy left for education or small business, and many of them die.

Preventable water related diseases kill one child every 15 seconds. That's 8,000 every day (and that's just the children). Imagine if that many precious ones were dying in the U.S.!

THE SOLUTION:

Take the H²O Challenge!

- For 2 weeks (or the time of your choosing) make water your only beverage.
- Contribute the money you would have spent at the soda machine and coffee shop toward the drilling of clean water wells.
- Is it a sacrifice to give up your milk, coffee, soda, etc. for 2 weeks?
- Will you be changing someone else's life forever? Absolutely.
- What does The H²O Project get out of it? Financially, absolutely nothing, but they get the joy of knowing they have helped you (and many like you) make a difference.

THE PROCESS:

Pick one 14-day period during Lent.
Start fasting...Start Saving...
Save the children!

TO SEND THE MONEY COLLECTED:

- Make all checks payable to: NAFRA.
- You must note on the check memo the name of the Fraternity and the name of the Region.
- Mail ALL checks by May 1, 2011 to:

NAFRA – H²O PROJECT
920 Whitney Drive
Apple Valley, MN 55124

Dear Franciscan Youth and Young Adults,
Secular Franciscans and all those interested,

Peace be with you!

Many of you throughout the USA have participated in this project to bring clean drinking water to youth around the world, especially those in most need. We collected \$20,831.54 in 2010 by fasting and donating! National and International tragedies only underscore the world's need for clean, safe drinking water. This one project can be our way of providing some of that needed water. The recipient of the 2011 Lenten H²O Project donations is the *Catholic Relief Services (CRS)*, specifically for clean drinking water in Haiti.

We challenge you and your fraternities to not only donate—but to participate in this project. By actively fasting from all beverages except water, we'll get a truer idea of how important clean water is to our brothers and sisters around the world. We who participate in the project experience solidarity with the poor, a solidarity that is called for within our Franciscan Charism.

There are two new ways to donate to the H²O Project. The first new way is to give monthly or quarterly. Donations received after June 1, 2011 however, will be donated as part of the 2012 H²O Project.

The second way to donate is to "Donate in Memory". This program allows a donation to be made in memory of a person, group or event. A certificate stating this donation will be mailed to the address you provide.

We ask you to consider joining us in this time of sacrifice. To find out more information on *The H²O Project*, or if you have questions, email: SFO-H2O@hotmail.com

Do it, so you can say..."We all gave it up so we could all give it away!" Help our Council to give it away this year to those who need it the most!

Please pray for *The H²O Project* and the many communities waiting for a well.

FROM MY CORNER OF THE WORLD

ANNE MULQUEEN, SFO

INTERNATIONAL COUNCILOR, USA

Amulqueen.icusa@gmail.com



Dear Sisters and Brothers,

The Lord give you peace.

In this letter I want to focus primarily on one topic—Franciscan youth.

If you visit the *Youfra* website: www.ciofs.org/youfra.htm you will see **this** definition of who they are:

WHO ARE WE?

- We are Franciscan Youth. • We are young. • We feel attracted by St. Francis of Assisi.
- We try to share the experience of Christian life in Fraternity.
- We deepen our vocation within the context of the Secular Franciscan Order.
- We have our own specific organization, YOUFRA. • We are present in many countries.

First, I must admit, I am not an authority on youth, nor do I have all the answers on how to attract young people to form fraternity. What I do know is that the charism of our founder is just what spirit-filled, optimistic young people need and are looking for.

As I begin to write about this Third Priority of the International Fraternity, I feel inadequate and a bit overwhelmed. Those who work with youth know the difficulties encountered establishing youth initiatives in the United States better than I do.

What I want to do is start a dialogue and gather the wisdom of the SFO body. You may remember, in my last letter I set up an email address so that you could write to me:

Amulqueen.icusa@gmail.com

The obligation to involve and assist young people in the Franciscan family was voted the third priority during the Int'l. Chapter in 2008. Since her election as Youfra Presidency Councilor, Ana Fruk, has established a council to help her with this enormous task. That council consists of youth representatives from various geographical areas of the world, a fraternal animator and a general spiritual assistant. The representative for North America is Ana Catarina Santos.

The regional ministers were contacted recently about what is being done throughout the USA in regard to youth. Now I am asking you, as individual Secular Franciscans, to let us know your thoughts and how you are working with youth.

TAU-USA space is limited, and I know I can't present all the information and issues in the space allotted; therefore, I will use bullets to start a discussion on what we might do to fulfill our responsibility to youth. I believe we must be creative and, perhaps, think *outside of the box*.

- Working with youth is **not an option**. It is an article of our Rule. *Article 24* states: "... the council should organize ... meetings with other Franciscan groups, especially with youth groups."
- We need to **pray** that the Lord of the Harvest will show us the way to fulfill this priority and follow our Rule.
- We need to be aware that the CIOFS Youfra website has many **resources** to help us start the process and develop initiatives.
- We need to acknowledge that what may be successful in other parts of the world may not be the way to approach American youth.
- We need creative initiatives to attract young people who are drawn by the Holy Spirit to the Franciscan charism.
- We need Secular Franciscans who are called by the Spirit and have the gifts to work with youth.
- Finally, if you feel called to work with youth or young adults, test the call in prayer, and then if you still feel led to this ministry, gather some like-minded Secular Franciscans to support and work with you.

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(Continued from page 8)

Now for a little information about what's on the horizon for youth in the coming year.



The Twenty-sixth World Youth Day ("WJD") will be held in August 2011, in Madrid, Spain.

The theme will be "Planted and built up in Jesus Christ, firm in the faith" (cf. Col 2:7).

The International Commission of the Franciscan Family and the Commission of the Franciscan Family of Spain will set up a "Franciscan Village" so that our family will be able to celebrate this event together.

This "Village" will be active and used from August 16-19, 2011, in a space around the Church of San Francisco el Grande. World Youth Day ends on Sunday, August 21, 2011, with 9:00AM Mass celebrated by Pope Benedict XVI.

Specific programs for all WYD participants will be available. You might call the "Village" a universal fraternity. Among the activities will be concerts, performances, testimonies (*The Festival of Joy*), Franciscan prayer, catechesis and Eucharist, plus participation is all the major events of World Youth Day.

So much more to say, but I will save it for next time. I look forward to hearing from you. And until we correspond again, I send fraternal affection to each of you.

Peace and all good,
your sister

Anne

SAVE Quinquennial XVIII July 3-8, 2012 Chicago, IL July 3-8, 2012 Chicago, IL

THEME: WHY FRANCIS? CLAIM THE GIFT!

The SFO of the United States will be gathering to explore the gift of our vocation as Secular Franciscans, and to discern as a family how we are to fulfill this vocation today. Each day has a sub theme:

Day 1: Who are You, O Lord?

An exploration of the Franciscan view of God.

Day 2: And what am I? The human person in God's design, our relationship with God.

Day 3: Who are we?

A review and revelation of the history of the Franciscan Family and the SFO's place in it.

Day 4: Discerning the Call of the SFO today.

WE ARE PRIVILEGED to have **Sr. Ilia Delio, OSF**, and **Brother Bill Short, OFM**, as our featured speakers, as well as our own **Ed Shirley, SFO**, and **Pat Brandwein-Ball, SFO**.

We encourage every fraternity to send at least one person to participate (*which means starting planning now*). It's also our intention that people who have to stay at home will still be able to participate by means of the Internet. More details later. Actual costs for the Q have not been determined.

Quinquennial Logo Contest

We are asking for submissions for a possible logo for the Quinquennial. It will be used to promote the Q.

The winning logo will find it's place on materials and mementos of the occasion (T-shirts, bags, etc).

LOGO THEME: It should reflect the joy in responding wholeheartedly to God's call to us through our vocation as Secular Franciscans, as a body. The winning design will entitle its creator to registration fees for the "Q" (including the meal plan).

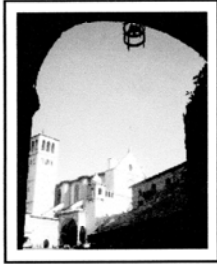
DEADLINE:

Send submissions to one (or both) of the Co-Chairs below by May 1, 2011. (E-mail submissions are fine, or hard copies if necessary).

Clare McCluggage, SFO and
Patrick Mendes, SFO
Quinquennial 2012
Planning Committee Co-Chairs

Clare McCluggage SFO
10407 NE 70th Ct.
Vancouver, WA 98686
claresfo@comcast.net

Patrick Mendes, SFO
pmendessfo@gmail.com



CNSA

NEWS & VIEWS

Franciscan life in the 21st Century

Lester Bach OFM Cap

TAKE A LOOK!



Let's **take a look** at what is happening in our Secular Franciscan Order. It is exciting as well as challenging. But that is normal for Franciscans. We accept the challenges that fresh ideas bring to our Franciscan way of life.

* **Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation (JPIC)** is clarifying its role and its possibilities for a future full of hope. Take time to read about it! It is another way to help us to personally implement some elements of the SFO Rule. **Take a look!**

* **Franciscan Action Network (FAN)** continues its efforts not only to inform us on national justice, peace, and social issues, but also draws our Franciscan Family together in common action within our country. We join together as Franciscans to work for the common good of people in the USA. **Take a look!**

* **Franciscans International (FI)** assists us to greater awareness of the global needs of the poor and marginalized throughout the world. It widens our perspectives and offers opportunities to touch people beyond our borders. **FI** is a Non-Governmental-Organization for people at the UN to learn of our Franciscan viewpoint on world issues. **Take a look!**

* Our Franciscan family is well **aware of the power of contemplative prayer** in our lives (Rule #8). Our Franciscan spirit sees prayerfulness and contemplation as vitally important for our ministerial service to others. Franciscans recognize that prayer and action are partners. Both are important in living a Franciscan life. **Take a look!**

* **Initial and ongoing formation** are essential for sharing the Franciscan spirit with newcomers and among the professed. It is good to have a common form of *initial* formation. This calls for common materials to assist formation directors and councils to build vibrant Franciscan communities in the USA.

It is interesting to note that a recent questionnaire reported that we are using about 60 different books for formation. That may not help us develop a common spirit. Some of the texts are fine books - but not for

formation! *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, for example, is fine for studying Church matters (e.g. doctrine). It is not a text that develops the Franciscan spirit among newcomers. Many such books can serve as resources but not as a primary formation text. Other books mentioned are good resources but their use as a formation text needs evaluation.

The Franciscan Journey is an up-to-date text that can be used as a text for initial formation. Other similar texts can serve well or be used as a resource for particular topics. Formation in our Franciscan life is supported by books like *The Franciscan Journey*. Councils need to dialogue and prayerfully consider materials that can best serve their formation programs - both *initial* and *ongoing* formation. **Take a look!**

* Our **web sites** serve us well by sharing not only information on issues pertinent to the SFO, but also keep us informed about materials that come from our Presidency in Rome and our National Executive council as well as decisions developed by our National (NAFRA) and Regional fraternities. **Take a look!**

* Many people are uncertain how to initiate the process of recommending a **new spiritual assistant**. There is no magic involved. The *SFO Constitutions* (Article 88.1), the *SFO Rule* (#26), and the *Statutes for Spiritual and Pastoral Assistance to the SFO* (Article 5.4) require SA candidates to be *suitable and well-prepared*.

A pastor, a priest, a deacon, a friar, a religious sister or brother, or a SFO member, is not automatically suitable. People may be well prepared for Church ministry but not necessarily for the role of spiritual assistant to a Secular Franciscan Fraternity. If there is meager knowledge of Franciscan spirituality or the spirit of the Secular Franciscan Order, there is need for a period of training and formation to become *suitable and well-prepared SA's*.

The Conference of National Spiritual Assistants (CNSA) is revising and updating the book, *Franciscan Family Connections*, to make it more effective in preparing spiritual assistants. The revised edition (With at least 6 new chapters) will be available sometime in early 2011. Its' *Introduction* (Pages i to iv) outlines the process for recommending people as spiritual assistants and how to enroll in the program. **Take a look!**

* **The Pastoral and Fraternal visitations** to local and regional fraternities and councils are special times. Experience indicates that not everyone understands the nature of a visitation. There are a variety of schedules that fraternities (local & regional) develop for a visitation. Sometimes it seems that there is little clarity about the purpose of the visitation.

Visitations are sometimes viewed as something to get finished as quickly as possible. This defeats the purpose of a visitation. A visitation requires time for interaction and dialogue between the visitors, the council, formation personnel, people in formation, open forums with the membership of the fraternity plus time for ongoing formation, examining various records and books of the fraternity and time to dialogue with the council and spiritual assistant(s). None of this can be rushed and still be effective.

Fraternity councils ought to read the texts in the *SFO Constitutions* (Articles 92-95) and the *Statutes for Spiritual Assistance to the SFO* (Article 14) and other available material. The council responds to queries from the visitors that precedes the visitation. The council invites their members to pray for the success of the visitation. **Take a look!**

* Newcomers who complete the entire 27 (or more) months of orientation and initial formation, and make their profession, are beginning their life as Secular Franciscans. The SFO Constitutions (Article 44.2) requires more: ***The Fraternity has the duty to give special attention to the formation of the newly professed ... to help them become fully mature in their vocation and develop a true sense of belonging.***

We have not been overwhelmed by reports of programs that actually do this. After the attention given during initial formation, it can happen that people feel forgotten after profession. It is easy, after a while, to drop out or begin to miss the regular gatherings when people do not seem to be concerned about them. Councils need to do something about it. **Take a look!**

* After all the time, effort, money, and meetings that have occurred to make formation more effective and in tune with fraternities around the world, we may have overlooked an important responsibility of Secular Franciscans. The SFO Constitutions (Article 45.1) puts it this way: *The promotion of vocations to the Order is a duty of the brothers and sisters and is a sign of the vitality of the fraternities themselves. The brothers and sisters, convinced of the validity of the Franciscan way of life, should pray that God may give the grace of the Franciscan vocation to new members.*

The text which immediately follows (Article 45.2) gives direction about vocations: *Although nothing can substitute for the witness of each member and of the*

fraternity, the councils must adopt appropriate means to promote the Secular Franciscan vocation.

Without newcomers there will be no formation! While this should be obvious, recruitment is not always seen as a personal responsibility. This responsibility includes the need to have a fraternal life that is attractive and informative. It should offer individual seculars fresh ways to fulfill the self-giving (consecration) of profession. Seculars seek vocations through personal contact and through programs of promotion. Mature secular Franciscans should create a loving community that is attractive to interested people. **Take a look!**



* It is easy to take a look backwards and find something that detoured our Franciscan life. We are marvelous "prophets" when we look backwards. This look can reveal a need for conversion. The Holy Spirit invites us to conversion. Franciscans, sensitive to this call - convert! **Take a look!**

* We can look at past formation and recognize its inadequacies. Yet many Franciscans found Jesus and holiness through these inadequate tools of formation. If the formation was inadequate it needs to be improved. It reminds us that holiness is the work of the Holy Spirit who uses the tools at hand until better ones come along. We are called to create "better tools" that the Holy Spirit can use *today* to draw us to Jesus and the Gospel. **Take a look!**

* Reflecting on the fears that influence our lives, we discover that our trust in God needs to grow. Fear is no stranger to most of us. Here is a short list of fears:

of violence / terrorism / war / pain / disease / loneliness / despair / about money and possessions / insecurity / fear of the stranger or of people different than we are / fear for our children growing up in this world / fear of being useless / loss of independence / fear of Sister Death / etc.

Francis, facing his personal fear of lepers, teaches us who guides us in dealing with fears when he wrote: *... the Lord led me among them and I showed mercy to them. And when I left them, what had seemed bitter to me, was turned into sweetness of soul and body. ...*
The Testament - Francis of Assisi - The Saint - Page 124

Take a look!

These are just a few issues that need dialogue and discussion. There are other issues that are not listed - e.g. willingness to be a servant-leader etc. Franciscans find ways to meet needs. Life does not stand still. New situations require a fresh look. Secular Franciscans deal creatively with today's issues. Conversion is a normal part of our lives!

JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION
 KENT FERRIS, SFO—JPIC CHAIR
 kentferris45@yahoo.com

NEW COLLABORATIVE PROJECT WITH CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES (CRS) DEEMED “COURAGEOUS INITIATIVE”

At the October annual gathering of the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in Scottsdale, Arizona, there was unanimous support for Justice, Peace & the Integrity of Creation embarking on “courageous initiatives.”

During his presentation, newly appointed JPIC Chair, Kent Ferris, SFO, cited the Order’s rule, particularly Chapter 2, section 15: “Let them individually and collectively be in the forefront in promoting justice by the testimony of their human lives and their courageous initiatives. Especially in the field of public life, they should make definite choices in harmony with their faith.”

Ferris continued by citing the commentary that accompanies this part of the Rule: “The first particular aspect of the Secular Franciscans’ evangelical action is social justice, both on the individual level and on the level of community participation. They must show justice themselves and motivate justice in others, not just in their private lives, but also in the public forum of politics, business, economics and the like.

This mandate for advancing social justice as an organized group overturns previous prohibitions against a common expression of rights when it is carried out as a means of demonstrating the convictions of faith.”

In addition to the many JPIC efforts being undertaken by Secular Franciscans at the local and regional levels, Ferris shared a “courageous initiative,” whereby which NAFRA would collaborate with *Catholic Relief Services*, specifically on their *Catholics Confront Global Poverty Campaign*.

“The project will be courageous because the effort will be in addition to the work already occurring with and in support of *Franciscan Mission Services* and the *Franciscan Action Network*, and others. And it requires initiative, the type that only a handful of religious orders are demonstrating at this time.

We will follow the CRS model of Praying, Learning, Acting/Advocating and Giving. The project will enable us to learn and respond to present JPIC issues abroad and will build our order’s capacity for future efforts wherever they are needed,” Ferris stated.

Catholic Relief Services is excited about the collaboration with the Secular Franciscan Order's Courageous Initiative as part of the *Catholics Confront Global Poverty Campaign*. This collaboration will boost our joint efforts to speak out against injustice and poverty in solidarity with our brothers and sisters worldwide.

**Joan Rosenhauer
 Executive Vice President
 U.S. Operations, *Catholic Relief Services***

The project with CRS began immediately with first information session slated for January, 2011, and the next scheduled for February 12, 2011. Ferris noted that the ramp-up time will be shorter because many of the prayer and learning tools are already in place as part of the *Catholics Confront Global Poverty Campaign*.

“I am very excited about this project. I have seen firsthand the impact CRS has on communities in developing countries. It is all about promoting peace and justice by way of respect and dignity, serving with rather than doing for. CRS efforts stand to benefit with the infusion of energy that an order comprised of 14,000 active members can bring. Our Order will benefit by embarking on this project because we will learn that confronting global poverty requires much creativity and passion, both of which we possess. And in so doing we will do as Pope Benedict XVI charges us all to do, “...end the marginalization of the world’s poor.”

(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12)

Resolution on Migration

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION WAS INTRODUCED AND
UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED AT THE NAFRA GATHERING:

WE, THE NATIONAL FRATERNITY OF THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, are gathered for our annual meeting at the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, Arizona from October 26 to 31, 2010. After study and consideration, the representatives of thirty national regions with over 14,000 members find intolerable some current harsh attitudes towards migration and deplore the fear and anxiety paralyzing our immigrant brothers and sisters.

As Franciscans, we intentionally chose to come to Arizona to stand in solidarity with the migrants in our midst.

Regardless of the result of the upcoming election, The National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order wishes to express the following points:

We endorse the United States Catholic Bishops' urgent call for Comprehensive Immigration Reform, including their strong support for the DREAM act.

We support and encourage all the humanitarian efforts to assist immigrants who are struggling to survive.

We pray for peace and harmony, and we always remember in prayer families who are being torn apart.

13

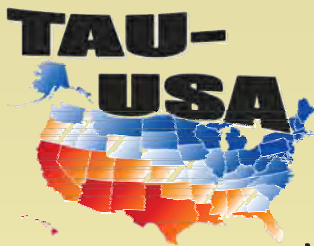


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BEFORE YOU DO UNTO OTHERS

by

M. MARKO, SFO
STAFF EDITOR
camontcu@aol.com

If there is anyone in our lives that we are likely to be unfair with, it's us. We're too hard on us. We expect too much of us. We're impatient with us. We're less than honest with us. So often, we find it easier to forgive someone else than to forgive ourselves. We accept another person's flaws and shortcomings while regarding our own peccadilloes as major crimes. We try to be patient with someone else and if we fall short of our goal, we're even more impatient with ourselves.

Needless to say, if you have a problem getting along with yourself, you have really got a PROBLEM! Cos there's no way you can avoid you or get away from you. You're stuck with you. So the better you treat you, the easier life will be.

Forgiveness – why is it so difficult to forgive ourselves? Part of it could be the fact that self-forgiveness is not something we've ever been taught. That we should forgive others is drummed into us from early on.

It's an important part of the "Our Father". All our training and thought processing makes forgiveness a quality requiring two or more people. Nothing is ever said to us about forgiving ourselves.

But how can we forget if we can't thoroughly forgive? And how can we thoroughly forgive unless we allow ourselves to get under that mantle of forgiveness that we (with surprising ease sometimes) throw over others.

Another part of it could be the fact that, while we can make up excuses for someone else's behavior simply because we don't know exactly what was going on in their heads at the time, we can't fake it with ourselves. We know exactly where our heads were at. We know if there weren't any excuses for our behavior.

Of course, the other side of this coin is a lack of honesty with ourselves. Quite often, we refuse to see the need for forgiveness because we've managed, through diligent rationalization, to convince ourselves that even if everyone else is wrong in doing a particular

thing, we are somehow justified in the same act.

Anytime you find yourself putting someone down because of something they've done, ask yourself if you've ever done the same thing. In all probability, the answer will be "yes". However, human nature being what it is, you'll doubtless stretch the answer out to "yes – but . . ." If you think your excuses hold water, ask yourself if you'd be willing to accept them from someone else.

Another facet of being honest with ourselves is an acceptance of our own flaws and the goodness of our efforts to overcome them. Try as we might, we don't always succeed. But rather than dwell on our failure, we should remember that we did try, and then try again. After all, when it's time to cash in our chips, God's not going to ask us what we accomplished so much as what we tried to accomplish. It's our efforts that will count.

(These lacks of self-forgiveness and self-honesty are mild forms of despair and presumption – both major sins in themselves.)

It would probably be easier to get along with ourselves if we kept in mind how much God loves us. Francis, while always considering himself unworthy, never fell into the trap of thinking himself worthless. He knew that God loved him; and secure in that knowledge, he could get along with himself. He owned his shortcomings and never stopped working to overcome them. He never reached a point where he felt confident a given sin was no longer a threat to him; nor did he ever throw his hands up and say, "What's the use? I'll never make it!" He knew he would make it – warts and all.

We can make it, too. But it'll be a lot easier if we realize we don't have to battle ourselves all along the way.

Better to make friends with ourselves and accept whatever help we can give ourselves, to be honest enough with ourselves to chide ourselves when we deserve it and to encourage ourselves when we need it.

Every day is a bit easier if you start it by seeing a friend in the mirror!

2010 Chapter

By BOB & MARY STRONACH, SFO

**A sense of family,
a spirit of peace, and
a hunger for courageous initiatives
would pervade the annual chapter
of the U.S. Secular Franciscan Order,
held Oct. 26-31 in Arizona.**

Arriving at the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, regional ministers, delegates and others were greeted by soaring palm trees, cacti of myriad shapes and sizes, and assorted desert flora, sprawling across white sand in gardens enveloping the center. A self-standing archway belltower beckoned all to enter “Casa de Paz y Bien” – house of peace and good. “Casa” is its nickname, reflecting a place set apart in the desert for renewal of the spirit.



The courtyard, looking south toward Camelback Mountain. INSET: Entrance to the Franciscan Renewal Center.



Joanne Angeletti, SFO
St. Maximilian Kolbe Region
(Northern Ohio)



Mary Frances Charsky, SFO,
minister of Bl. Kateri
Tekakwitha Region
(Upstate New York
& Northwest Penn-
sylvania), conducted
the orientation for
new regional minis-
ters (left and below).



Charlotte Collord, SFO
Ohana O'Ke Anuenu Region
(Hawaii)



Marian Crosby, SFO
Franciscans of Prairie Region
(Central Illinois: Chicago to south)

A PRE-CHAPTER orientation for new regional ministers and first-time attendees occupied the afternoon, prior to the chapter's opening mass, which was celebrated by newly installed Phoenix Auxiliary Bishop Eduardo Nevares. During introductions before mass, National Vice Minister Elaine Hedtke presented the bishop with a Tau cross, which she had carved from "Sister Tree" that "Brother Wind" had toppled in her backyard. In the chapel, Bishop Nevares fastened it to a cord and donned the Tau as his pectoral cross – to the delight of some 80 Secular Francis-

cans, friars, Poor Clares and others, including Anglican and Ecumenical Franciscans attending the chapter.

"I think of St. Francis as a seed," the bishop preached. "...A seed that the Holy Spirit used to produce great fruit." The results, 800 years later, is a vast Franciscan family and "the innumerable others who have known and been touched by Franciscans."

"Brothers and sisters," he said, "we are all called to be saints, we are all called to be holy, we are all called to be seeds... There are living saints among us now who are living the love of God and neighbor in an heroic fash-

ion." He noted: St. Thomas Aquinas "reminds us, if you want to know Christ," look at the cross. "The cross will teach us about humility, the cross will teach us about patience, the cross will teach us about forgiveness, the cross will teach us about love."

Bishop Nevares said Francis of Assisi "meditated long and profoundly on the cross of Christ" – a good model for "you who have committed your lives to the teaching, example and spirituality of St. Francis."

"I pray in a great way for each of you so that your time here... will be greatly blessed... and (you will)



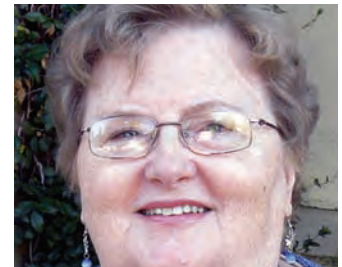
Joan Geiger, SFO
Tau Cross Region
(Greater NY City Area)



Pat Houghton, SFO
St. Joan of Arc Region
(MS, LA, E. TX, Memphis, TN)



Josh Molidor, SFO
Los Tres Companeros Region
(Central Texas)



Sherry Stevenson, SFO
St. Clare Region
(Missouri, Illinois, Indiana)



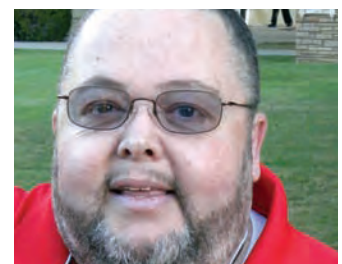
Sheri Hafeli, SFO
Divine Mercy Region
(Lower Michigan & Toledo, OH)



Cyl Maljan, SFO
Lady Poverty Region
(Parts of PA, OH, WV, VA, MD)



Jerry Rousseau, SFO
Bros & Srs of St. Francis Region
(GA, NC, SC, AL, TN)



Steve White, SFO
Holy Trinity Region
(Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana)

be renewed in Franciscan spirituality and commitment, and go out to share the experience of St. Francis in the everyday.”

Following mass, National Minister Deacon Tom Bello said there were many nominations for the Peace Award, but the National Fraternity (NAFRA) had to settle on one most deserving. As the bishop said at mass, “if you want to see Christ, look at the cross,” Bello said. “If you want to see Francis of Assisi today, look at” Br. David Buer, OFM, friend to Arizona’s homeless and migrants. Bishop Nevares then presented the award to Brother David, and posed for pictures with the friar and his mother, Doris, who came in from Ballwin, MO.



Bishop Eduardo Nevares presents Peace Award to Br. David.

THE NEXT DAY, Bello opened the chapter assembly with talk of a Gospel vision, with four priority areas for the order – fraternity, formation, communication, youth. “The vision of the

order,” he said, “begins with us” -- Franciscans who live and work in “an increasingly pagan world,” where “Christ is not brought into the public discourse” very much, “except in profane ways.”

The theme of the chapter, he said, is “a call and a challenge” – *“Bringing the Gift of Gospel Living to Life: Our Credible Witnessing.”*

Continued Bello: “Our basic Secular Franciscan vision, as it says in our Rule, is to go from Gospel to life and life to Gospel, and to build the kingdom of God... We need to make Christ our goal, our life, our light.”

On the four priorities:

1. **Fraternity** is the community of love... The visible expression of the church.”

It’s where Franciscans are called to be; and, if there is a problem, it may be a failure of formation, the second priority.

2. Both the international and national fraternities are placing an emphasis on good **formation**. That’s why the

Friar to the Homeless Gets Special Birthday Gift: 2010 Peace Award

SCOTTSDALE, AZ -- Brother David Buer, OFM, a Franciscan friar who has been working with the homeless and marginalized in Tucson and Las Vegas, received a special birthday gift on Oct. 26, a day after he turned 57 -- the National Peace Award from the Secular Franciscan Order.

“It’s my experience that we can expect God’s blessing when we bring these people -- the poor, the homeless, the migrants -- into our circle of love,” Brother David told some 80 ministers, delegates and observers representing 14,000 Secular Franciscans across the U.S.

He said he was humbled and honored to receive the same award that, in the past, also went to the likes of Dr. Martin Luther King



Br. David Buer, OFM

Jr. and Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

Brother David said he was inspired to work among the poor and homeless by the words of Jesus Christ and by a simple act of St. Francis of Assisi. A passage in Matthew’s Gospel “shot through me” – the one where Jesus says, “whatever you did for one of these

least brothers of mine, you did for me.” And St. Francis, the spoiled son of a wealthy merchant, had a life-changing moment when he encountered a leper on the road: Instead of giving him wide berth, Francis embraced the leper. “Who are the lepers of today?” Brother David asked. “Who are the marginalized people?”

Brother David entered religious life later in life, making his permanent profession as a Franciscan brother in 1996 – a year before he arrived in Las Vegas, where he established Poverello House, a daytime refuge for the homeless. In 2002 he established a second Poverello House in Henderson, NV. He also went on a two-week vigil and fast in Las Vegas, living in a tent

on a vacant lot to publicize the need for more shelters. A group of homeless men befriended and protected him during the vigil. “It put me in solidarity with those who have less.”

Next he was assigned to Tucson, AZ, where in 2008 he established another Poverello House and where, for the past five summers, he set up Cooling Centers at two churches six days a week (three days at each church). The homeless could escape the oppressive summer heat in an air conditioned center and find food, cold beverages and a place to relax and read.

The Award comes with a St. Francis statue and a \$2,000 prize.

“That money is going to Poverello House in Tucson,” Brother David said.



Dc. Tom Bello, SFO
National Minister



Michelle Kim, SFO
National Councilor



Arturo Villarreal, SFO
National Councilor



Br. Bob Brady, OFM
Nat'l Spiritual Assistant

National Formation Commission, chaired by Bob Fitzsimmons, will hold a workshop in May to unveil a formation manual for training formators (formation directors).

3. **Communication**, the third priority, “always needs improvement.” The national chapter and Tau-USA magazine are primary means of communication. “I challenge you to think about how we can do this better,” he said.

4. Regarding **youth**, Bello asked: “If you are 40 or younger, please stand up.” Two persons rose from their seats. The challenge, he said, is how to attract younger people to the Secular Franciscan life when so much of their world is not God-centered. “How can we give that credible witnessing and show that joy...so they’ll come to us?”

ALSO ON WEDNESDAY, other national leaders got to share a few thoughts.

Holding up a tiny, three-ring pretzel, National Councilor Michelle Kim declared it a picture of “diversity in unity.” She spoke of the project to translate articles in Tau-USA into key languages found in a growing number of U.S. fraternities, such as Korean and Spanish.

National Councilor Arturo Villarreal said he was inspired by discussion of “what we’re doing” around the country, such as what’s represented in the Peace Award. “We work with the poor, we comfort the sick, we love our brothers and sisters. This is who we are.”

As the bishop noted the night before, he said, “there are saints among us... Today

we’re living the life of Francis.” He urged: “Do what is necessary; then you will do what is possible; and finally, you will do the impossible.”

In pointing to the need to have a good spiritual assistant for every fraternity, National Spiritual Assistant Br. Bob Brady, OFM, noted that the spiritual assistant training curriculum, Franciscan Family Connections, was being updated on an on-going basis.

Quoting scripture, he offered: “He sent you into the world so that you may bear witness to his voice.”

“Consider,” he added, “what morsel you can bring to the table” to plant “a seed of Christ”.

Fr. Lester Bach, OFM Cap., national spiritual assistant and author of forma-

tion books, noted that despite the turmoil in the world, “our Franciscan vocation invites us to see the signs of the times in a forward-looking light.” In other words, instead of wringing their hands, “Franciscans sing the joy of God’s love.” And our profession recognizes that “we are called to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ.” Paraphrasing Pope Benedict XVI, he said one does not make the world more human by acting inhumanely; we are called to do good now.

U.S. International Councilor Anne Mulqueen sees “love relationships” in the Franciscan charism. “My dream for us is to enter into a relationship of love, at all levels.” She quoted Br. Felice Cangelosi, OFM Cap., who spoke at the international chapter:

“With profession, our relationship is stronger than blood.” She described a “dynamic relationship of God and us and others,” and summed up: “We look at each other as individual, as unique, as irrepeatable, and without one of us, we are diminished.”

Then she introduced the international



Fr. Lester Bach, OFM Cap
Nat'l Spiritual Assistant



Anne Mulqueen, SFO
U.S. International Councilor



Tibor Kausar & Fr. Amanuel
International Visitors

fraternal visitor, Tibor Kauser of Hungary, the international councilor for English-speaking countries (Area 1).

After extending greetings from General Minister Encarnita del Pozo of Spain and General Vice Minister Doug Clorey of Canada, Kauser immediately assured the assembly that as fraternal visitor, he was not an inspector. "I'm one of you...I'm here to share in your joy and in your challenges."

He said his goal was "to listen, to learn, to share" and that he especially wanted to learn as "you have many treasures" in the U.S. order.

"I have come here to serve you. I would like to ask you to receive me as one from among you."

Pointing to the local fraternity as "the most important place in the order," he urged: "Strengthen the bond in your local fraternity."

Fr. Amanuel Mesgun Temelso, OFM Cap., the pastoral visitor from Rome, spoke of the unity of the Franciscan family. "We are one," he said, because our founder's aim and purpose was the same – "to build the church of Christ." He said he was inspired by the unity and the example of Secular Franciscans. "I thank you for living the Gospel...in the world and...among the people."

WITH SHARING going on in geographic groups and among attendees, the subject of vocations came up. Kim Smolik of Franciscan Mission Service mentioned she had been in Zambia recently where "religious vocations are blossoming" and where the number of Secular Fran-



Ed Shirley
Ecumenical/Interfaith Chair



Kent Ferris
JPIC Chair

ciscans is growing so fast, they can't keep track of the numbers. Father Amanuel concurred that, unlike the U.S. and Europe, Africa was booming with vocations, which is why the International Fraternity has taken on "the African Project" to help provide resources for formation. Africa lacks funds for formation materials, he said.

THE TOPIC OF youth, as one of the four priorities, drew some discussion, too. "If we're serious about reaching youth, we have to think like them...and realize they're asking different questions today," offered Ed Shirley, theology professor and Ecumenical/Interfaith chair. He gave an example: Youth today ask questions like "how am I connected?" rather than "what's my purpose in life?"

Kent Ferris, the new JPIC chair, suggested meeting youth "where they are" – such as in their interest in ecology and the environment, or the way they use technology such as Facebook and Twitter.



Fr. Kevin Queally, TOR
National Spiritual Assistant

National Spiritual Assistant Fr. Kevin Queally, TOR, piped up that he was organizing a group of college students to go to World Youth Day in Madrid, Spain next August and the Franciscan Youth (YouthFra) gathering immediately preceding it. "My dream is I'll come back with 12 fired-up youth who want to start a Franciscan Youth/Young Adult group." He mentioned he was trying to raise funds to help defray the travel expenses, especially since some of the students were barely scraping by with their college costs. The chapter later voted to donate \$2,400 from the Youth/Young Adult budget and sponsor

two of the students.

AT LATE AFTERNOON MASS, Father Kevin spoke of "servant leaders not being in it for the power or glory." They are "called by God to serve." One line from the scripture reading jumped out at him, he said. "Doing the will of God from the heart, willingly serving the Lord." That's what living out profession is, he said. It's continuous, unending. So, "do his will, willingly from the heart."

THE EVENING began with a presentation on Franciscan Mission Service (FMS), which sends lay missionaries to work alongside Franciscans in Third World countries, and then was capped off by a panel presentation on immigration.

"Poverty is so great in the countries we serve," said FMS Director Kim Smolik.

"Our hope," she added, "is that the Secular Franciscan Order will join Franciscan Mission Ser-



Kim Smolik
Franciscan Mission Service



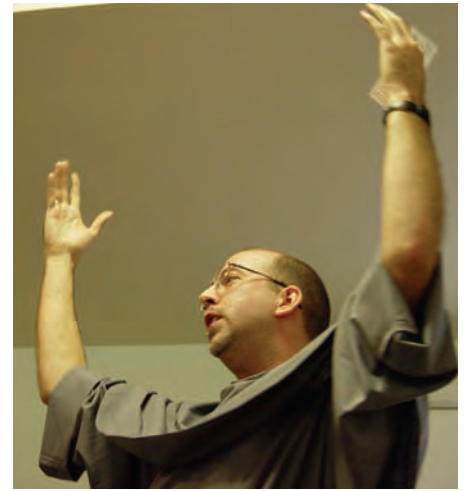
Patti Sills-Trausch
Immigration Panelist



Connie Andersen
Immigration Panelist



Fr. Larry Janezic, OFM
Franciscan Action Network



Fr. Michael Lasky, OFM Conv.
Franciscans International

vice in a deliberate partnership to spread and deepen the Franciscan charism.”

She noted that missionaries go through 16 weeks of Franciscan formation before departing for a three-year assignment, and that it costs \$1,500 a month to support one missionary. She hoped Secular Franciscans would support FMS through prayer, by getting the word out, and with donations. “If I were able to say that every region of the Secular Franciscan Order across the United States supports us, there’s power in that.”

WITH A controversial immigration law bringing national attention to Arizona, immigration has become “a very polarizing issue among us in the faithful community,” noted panelist Patti Sills-Trausch of Casa Advocacy Network.

What it boils down to is the “people come here for economic reasons,” said the other panelist, Connie Andersen of Valley Interfaith Project.

She offered a brief history of U.S. immigration policy

and noted that because of restrictions in immigration law and bureaucratic redtape, it is virtually impossible for the overwhelming majority of migrants coming from Mexico to legally come to the U.S. to work.

Congress, she said, needs to pass legislation allowing migrants better access to work in America and making it easier for U.S. companies to obtain plentiful work visas for migrants.

“What we hear in the news is not so much tied to facts as to fear,” Andersen said. “Are we going to let our fear govern us, or our faith?”

Over the next few days, attendees would discuss immigration and then approve a statement declaring solidarity with migrants.



Franciscans International’s Fr. Michael Lasky, OFM Conv., had everyone raising their arms in praise.

THURSDAY MORNING featured brief remarks by national appointees and presentations by Franciscan Action Network’s Fr. Larry Janezic, OFM, and Franciscans International’s Fr. Michael Lasky, OFM Conv.

Father Larry spoke of creating conditions to possibly have “an impact on transforming public policy” and promoted FAN’s “Care for Creation,” a Franciscan ecological training program.

Franciscans International, with offices at the United Nations, “is the only shared ministry of the entire Franciscan family,” noted Father Michael. Goals include ending poverty, stopping the spread of HIV/AIDS, and improving maternal and child health. Father Larry appealed

for donations, asking Secular Franciscans to donate \$5 a month and then ask five people to do the same.

THE AFTERNOON was devoted to On-Going Formation. Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM, spiritual assistant to the National Formation Commission, gave a two-part talk on the importance and sacredness of profession.

He quoted Br. Felice Cangelosi, the vicar general of the Capuchin Franciscans, who declared at the international chapter that the Church recognizes Secular Franciscans as belonging to a real Order, and that profession in the Order is of the same importance as religious profession -- different, but of equal import.

“It is seen by the universal church as the same thing, as giving ourselves over to God,” Father Richard said.

Profession has a number of “awesome” elements:

- It is Holy Spirit-driven: An invitation to vocation. Furthermore, the minister invokes the Holy Spirit and calls the Holy Spirit down on the people being professed.

- It is a fundamental moment and an intense moment with God.

- It's a ritual done in a public arena, in the presence of the fraternity, and a platform to give a response to God.

- It's dedicating oneself to service of God's kingdom, and it's grace-filled, because "we couldn't do that without a big dose of God's grace."

- It's a consecration, a dedication to God's exclusive service while living in the world as a single or married person... to be at God's disposal.

Because of the significance of profession, it is vital to have a discernment process during the formation of candidates.

The profession ceremony should take place during Mass, with a friar or priest present to be the witness for the church and Order, he said. He even encouraged fraternities to postpone profession until a friar or priest can be scheduled to participate.

"You are Franciscan men and Franciscan women in your own right," he said, and quoting Brother Felice, he added: "The SFO profession has the dignity of solemn and religious profession and cannot be considered lesser than that of a religious profession."



Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM
Speaking on the Significance of Profession

AT MASS following Ongoing Formation, Father Richard continued the profession theme. He compared professed SFOs to the apostle since they are being called to a deeper relationship with God and are experiencing the gradual unfolding of the revelation of God. Brother Felice, he went on, made a connection between profession and the Eucharist. "We present ourselves as an oblation, much the same as bread and wine on the altar... We place ourselves on the altar during profession."

He added: "Permanent profession is an on-going glorification of God." So every time SFOs go to mass and partake of the Eucharist, it's like an on-going act of profession.

THURSDAY EVENING began with Secular Franciscan Alan Ouimet talking

up his Franciscan Family Apostolate. With some 1,400 sponsors, the apostolate is making a difference in the lives of destitute families in India. He asks new sponsors to donate a minimum of \$25 a month. Families being helped may earn \$10 a month, "so \$25 is like manna from heaven."

He works with religious sisters in India to identify families and pressing needs. He showed a video of one family with a disabled father and a handicapped grandchild living in a dilapidated structure. The apostolate was able to provide the family with a new home.

"I need your help. We can't do it alone." He noted that 90 percent of the sponsors are Secular Franciscans, and he could use many more. "We have over 1,000 families on a waiting list."

THE EVENING

ended with *Francesco's Café*, a round robin of displays by national committees and special guests.

For example, the new Tau-USA editor, **Anna Geraci**, was handing out a special color run of the national newsletter;

National Archivist **Sharon Deveaux** had a packet of tips for every regional minister; National Historian **Bill Wicks** was signing copies of his Volume I history, and talking up his forthcoming Volume II; Ecumenical/Interfaith Chair **Ed Shirley** was offering to come to regions to give talks and share his ecumenical journey, which began when he was born to a Catholic dad and a Baptist mom; Spirit and Life Team (SALT) coordinator **Marie Amore** was urging regions to schedule the SALT experience, which she described as a weekend journey of life-giving growth; and the self-described Nerd Herd (Computer Committee members **Dan Mulholland**, **Bob Herbelin** and **Roger Raupp**) was anything but nerdy, belting out old tunes with National Secretary Jan Parker, Fr. Lester Bach, and other visitors who plopped down and stayed.



Alan Ouimet, SFO
Fran. Family Apostolate



Francesco's Cafe featured, among others, Editor Anna Geraci, Archivist Sharon Deveaux and Historian Bill Wicks, SALT team's Marie Amore, and Nerd Herd's Dan Mulholland, Roger Raupp and Bob Herbelin.



Attendees pose for a group photo, squinting in bright sunlight, before visiting nearby Phoenix. All 30 regions were represented at the Chapter, except for one, whose minister arrived in Arizona only to have to rush her mother to the hospital.

FRIDAY'S SCHEDULE provided an afternoon of sightseeing in nearby Phoenix, culminating in Mass and supper at St. Mary's Basilica. The downtown Franciscan parish, regarded as Phoenix's mother church, is located literally in the shadow of the city's convention center. Its adjacent park boasts sculptures of St. Francis, Mother Teresa and Pope John Paul

II (commemorating his 1987 visit). Fr. Vince Mesi, OFM, is the rector, and he likes to sing. His homily and the readings were the only parts of the mass that he didn't lift in song. He even serenaded chapter attendees with Italian ballads during a pasta feast in the church basement.

PRIOR TO THE "half-day away", chapter

participants had "credible witnessing" and "courageous initiatives" on their minds during the morning session.

JPIC Chair Kent Ferris proposed partnering with Catholic Relief Services in its "Catholics Confront Global Poverty" campaign. It's an opportunity to involve "local, regional and national fraternities." He suggested a one-year trial, asking

Secular Franciscans to "pray, learn, act/advocate, and finally give" to the campaign. Throughout the coming year, JPIC would organize monthly or periodic "webinars" (a meeting or seminar over the World Wide Web) involving interested people from regions and fraternities.

The assembly unanimously voted to endorse Ferris' vision.



Fr. Vince Mesi, OFM, the singing rector at St. Mary's Basilica in Phoenix (right).



U.S. Secular Franciscan Order Declares Solidarity with Migrants

The U.S. Secular Franciscan Order declared its “solidarity with migrants in our midst” during its national gathering Oct. 29 at the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, AZ.

The national body, representing 14,000 Secular Franciscans across the United States, unanimously

approved a statement declaring “some current harsh attitudes towards migration” as intolerable and deploring “the fear and anxiety paralyzing our immigrant brothers and sisters.”

“As Franciscans, we intentionally chose to come to Arizona to stand in soli-

arity with the migrants in our midst,” the statement reads.

The statement goes on to say:

- “We endorse the United States Catholic Bishops’ urgent call for Comprehensive Immigration Reform, including their strong support for

the DREAM act.”

- “We support and encourage all the humanitarian efforts to assist immigrants who are struggling to survive.”

- “We pray for peace and harmony, and we always remember in prayer families who are being torn apart.”

That was immediately followed by a resolution to endorse a statement on immigration prepared by Father Kevin, Kent Ferris and Brother David. It passed unanimously and declared solidarity with migrants.

SATURDAY WAS the final day of chapter business, with Sunday primarily a travel day – although a post-chapter roundtable discussion awaited those who could hang around before heading to the airport.

Br. Bob Brady helped kick off Saturday by encouraging attendees to be open to “God moments.”

He challenged: “Go back to your fraternities” and “see God in the context of the poor.”

WITH THE national fraternity already a sponsoring member of FAN, National Minister Tom Bello proposed donating to other Franciscan causes: Amazon Relief, Franciscan Family Apostolate, Franciscan Mission Service and Franciscans International. The chapter unanimously approved giving \$1,000 to each of those ministries from the donor fund.

That was quickly followed by unanimous approval to send \$1,000 to Catholic Relief Services for Pakistani flood relief, and to urge Secular Franciscans to contribute to the donor fund and increase the amount going to Pakistani relief.

Regarding the donor fund, National Treasurer Dennis Ross reported that donations

coming to the fund made it possible to give \$19,473 to Haiti disaster relief and another \$2,340 for Philippines disaster relief in 2010. In addition, the Youth/Young Adult H2O Project raised \$20,832 for 2009 Peace Award Recipient Don Ryder’s Kenya Water Project.

“I’m impressed,” Juan de Padillo Regional Minister Frank Carpinelli said to murmurs of agreement. “\$42,000! We were able to give out (that much) in donations.”

He also said he was amazed the treasurer and executive council were able to propose a \$216,000 budget for 2011 -- the same bottom line as 2010.

“That’s a major achievement.”

The assembly then approved the budget.

THE CHAPTER ALSO:

- unanimously endorsed the establishment of a *Care for Creation Award*, with a mandate to come back next year with guidelines for launching it.

- unanimously adopted, with applause, a *U.S. Secular Franciscan Vocation Prayer*.

Franciscans of the Prairie Regional Minister Marian Crosby, who was inspired to write the prayer during the Chapter, noted: “God’s already given vocations. It’s our job to locate them.”

Translation teams have since translated the vocation prayer into Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, and Polish. See Pages 4-5.



Brother Bob, National Minister Tom Bello, Treasurer Dennis Ross and Vocation Prayer Author Marian Crosby.

AS THE CHAPTER was about to come to a close, international visitors offered final remarks, and the assembly moved outdoors to the center's Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine for the annual Rite of Remembrance in honor of deceased Franciscans across the country.

The Chapter's closing weekend coincided with the blessing of animals and pet adopt-a-thon – with scores of humane societies, animal rescue groups and pet organizations setting up exhibits. Hundreds of people walked the grounds with dogs of all breeds, and the friars came out to bless the animals.



Rite of Remembrance at Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine.



Pat Houghton, SFO, and Michelle Kim, SFO, took a stroll through the exhibits at the St. Francis Festival and Pet Adopt-A-Thon.



Peggy Alfano brought Keagen, a Border Collie, to visit St. Francis and receive a blessing from the friars. She adopted Keagen from Arizona Border Collie Rescue, one of a number of rescue groups at the St. Francis Festival. "They're awesome," she said.

DURING CLOSING MASS, Father Amanuel noted: “By our vocation, we are called to be brothers, sisters, mothers and spouses of Christ.”

We’re brothers and sisters when we “strive to do the will of the Father.”

We’re mothers when, “by our good example, others see Christ.”

We’re spouses when, “through the Holy Spirit, through the reading of the Bible and especially through receiving the Holy Eucharist...we are united with Christ.”

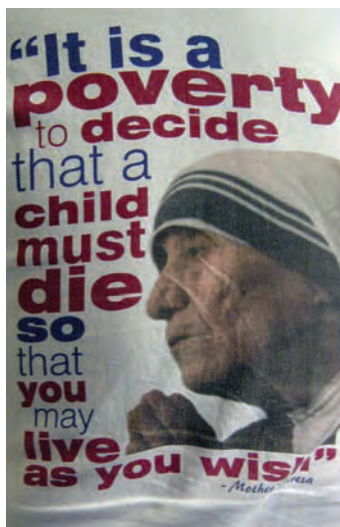
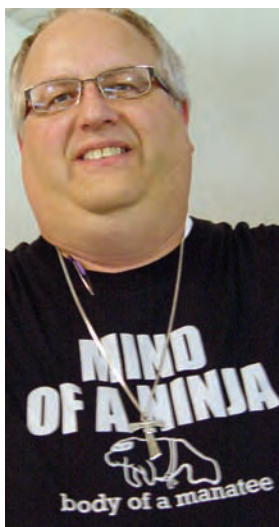
“We are blessed,” he concluded, “because we taste heaven when we are still on earth.”



Find NAFRA On Facebook

With talk of how youth stay connected via social media like Facebook and Twitter, Randy Heinz of Our Lady of the Rockies Region launched a Facebook page for NAFRA at the Chapter. To see and become part of it, go to Facebook.com and type “NAFRA” in the search box.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES: SECULAR FRANCISCANS AND THEIR CHAPTER T-SHIRTS



FACES OF THE TIMES: FRANCISCANS AT NATIONAL GATHERING



Vice Minister Elaine Hedtke. BELOW: National Councilor Mary Bittner and Secretary Jan Parker.



Rev. Deacon Joan Verret represented the Anglican Third Order Society of St. Francis, and Susan Kay (right) represented the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans. They offered, Tom Bello said, “a holy witness to our Franciscan journey together.”



Sue Simeone, minister of the host St. Thomas More Region, and her husband, Deacon Phil, who planned the Chapter’s liturgies. National Minister Tom Bello praised the regional council and all the volunteers who spent 10,000 man hours helping to make the chapter a success.



Chapter candid's



Mary Frances Charsky, SFO, was struck by a sculpture of her region's namesake, portraying Mohawk maiden Kateri Tekakwitha in the graceful act of washing her hair.



Josh Molitor, SFO, and Marie Amore, SFO, discuss spicing up regions with a little SALT.



Ken Beattie, SFO
LaVerna Region



Hans Huemmer, SFO
Five Franciscan Martyrs



Bob Fitzsimmons, SFO, Formation Commission chair



Ed Feiler, SFO
Queen of Peace



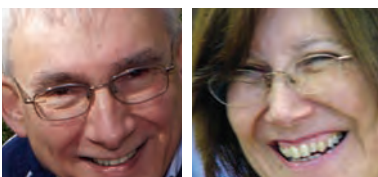
Daily praying and singing...and experiencing joy (below).



Sylvia Paoli, SFO
St. Francis Region



THE AUTHORS
Bob & Mary Stronach, SFO



by FRANCINE GIKOW, SFO
STAFF EDITOR
gikows@yahoo.com

Fraternity Dialogue and Communication

“... 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

Did you notice that I began with an excerpt from the same quote as the last issue on peacemaking? But this article is on communication! Why?

I believe that all peacemaking begins with good communication and that includes life in fraternity. Have you noticed that sometimes we are much better behaved in ministry than with our own brothers and sisters? It seems that since we live so long with our brothers and sisters in community, we take them for granted. In fact, this should be reversed! We should reflect in our fraternities the “holy unity” of the Trinity: Father, Son and Spirit² so that others might see the goodness of the Lord reflected there.

It may seem unattainable! But we are called, by our vocation as Secular Franciscans, to become this unity. Many times I have observed fraternity reunions where people have “talked over” others, impatiently interrupting and not allowing others to speak. I have also seen Brothers and Sisters who do not listen to others, push forward their own ideas. They may even attempt to substitute their own agenda during the meeting.

When I see these actions, I am filled with sadness because this is not the courtesy and respect that Francis wanted us to have! Francis used to say that a good lesser brother would have the faith and love of Brother Bernard, the simplicity and purity of Brother Leo and the courtly bearing of Brother Angelo who was endowed with courtesy and kindness.³

I was once taught a method of communication and listening. We invited the other to share. We were not to speak while the other was talking and were to use our body language to show love and caring by turning toward the other using eye contact. We took turns sharing. We did not blame. We did not talk about others. We simply described our feelings with “I” statements” such as “I feel...” or “It makes me sad when....” We allowed the other to speak freely and we only spoke to reflect and confirm what they were describing until their turn ended. This takes discipline!

We held their confidences as precious: confident in the divine seed within him/her. Do we do this during our meetings and communications with other SFO’s?

Sometimes, I think we need to review how we communicate in our fraternities and not take our brothers and sisters for granted. Yes, we all have issues and needs which we want our Council to know, but this should be done privately and not during the monthly fraternity reunion. We should do this with the same respect and courtesy of Brother Angelo for we have elected our Council to serve the whole fraternity. In turn, the Council must listen and prayerfully consider issues which the brothers and sisters present.

But what is your response when a member of the Council comes to you with a concern? It might be a reminder of your promise to come to fraternity meetings when we have been absent for a time and have not communicated our reasons to

the Council. Do I answer with anger or do I see it as an opportunity to grow with a renewed sense of mission? This call of accountability to our consecration as a Secular Franciscan, is a call to conversion and the Council is only reminding us about what we have already promised to do.

Not only are we to show courtesy to our brothers and sisters but we are to truly love them! We show our love by always communicating with respect and gentleness.

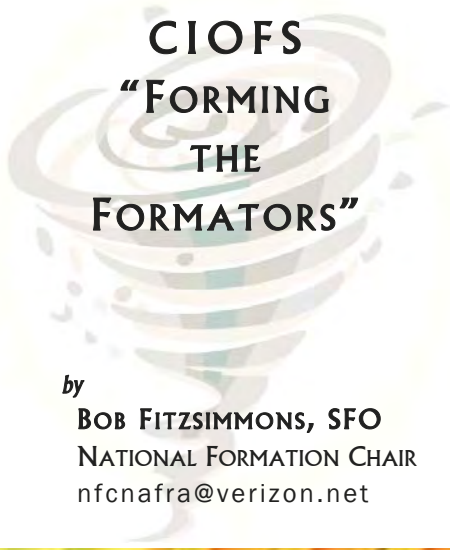
**“WHEREVER TWO OR THREE ARE
GATHERED TOGETHER IN MY NAME,
THERE AM I IN THE MIDST OF THEM.”**

MT 18:20

¹SFO Rule, 2 #17.

²The Tau-USA, Winter 2009,
#65, p. 26.

³*Collection of Sayings of the
Companions of St. Francis* in
Armstrong, Hellman & Short,
*Francis of Assisi: Early Documents:
The Prophet.*
New City Press, 2001. p.125.



CIOFS “FORMING THE FORMATORS”

by

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

ATTENTION ALL REGION FORMATION DIRECTORS AND FORMATION TEAMS:

**NATIONAL FORMATION WORKSHOP
“FORMING THE FORMATORS”
Our Lady of the Snows, Belleville, IL
MAY 12-15, 2011**

We would like 2 attendees from every region, and if possible, your regional Spiritual Assistant to attend and to become the basis for your regional formation team!!!

Registration form is available at www.nafraformation.org
Currently we are giving preference to Regional Formation teams.

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WHY THE “NEW” FORMATION?

Blessings all! I am guessing that some, possibly many of you are wondering why there is such a fuss over the new additions to our initial formation process. An initiative which has been in development by CIOFS since the General Chapter in 2002 and again affirmed by the General Chapter of 2008.

I think we need to agree, and I hope all do, that our Franciscan Charism, theology, tradition and spirituality, OUR UNIQUE image and longing for relationship with God and all creation provides an essential savor to the Church. A distinct ingredient without which the Church and our world would be diminished. Sure all Spiritualities provide a distinct flavor and enticement for individuals to draw closer to God and to live more Gospel oriented lives. All have an honored place in the Church, all are necessary, but they are different. We are looking to enhance and preserve what is uniquely ours to be.

Franciscans cannot help but to be joy-filled and joyful because our vision of our God as Lover and Loving Father can produce nothing less than abundance of Joy. This is the essence of our Franciscan Heritage, to be joyful and to exude this joy simply because of our relationship with Love itself.

BUT, what if this flavor was in danger of going flat or more realistically absorbed into or muddled by other ingredients, would the soup be as flavorful if it (we) could no longer be tasted? (sorry, yes I cook some).

This is the driving factor in our revamping the whole initial formation process. We hope to help true vocations to the Franciscan Family flourish and for those who are good prayerful people, but who don't share the essence that makes us – US, find their own distinct expression of spirituality.

That said, here is the kicker, this “new” formation is actually “old” formation. We are not inventing something new, but in essence we are just adding some meat to the bones you are all familiar with, “*The Guidelines for Initial Formation*” promulgated by NAFRA (via CIOFS) back in 1985.

Allow me to do a quick side by side to explain better.

I hope this chart will give you some understanding that the new materials being released, beginning at the May 2011 National Formation Workshop, are aimed at giving all our formation people greater depth of understanding of our Charism and an easier method to use the specific topics called for in our existing Formation Guidelines

Bob Fitzsimmons, SFO
National Formation Commission

Guidelines for Initial Formation
Approved October 1985 Ref: pp 25-35, 39

Orientation

Determine basic disposition to Franciscan
Charism & life in fraternity:

Content:

Overview of life of Francis
Branches of Franciscan Family
The SFO
Phases of Formation & expectations
Review Catholic Doctrine

Inquiry

1st Phase of Initial Formation begins more in-
depth process of identifying and discerning
vocation

Content

The Church & Vatican 2
Lay Spirituality
Life of St. Francis
History of the SFO
Structure of the SFO
Ritual of the SFO

Candidacy – preparation to embrace vocation and
make permanent Profession (consecrated life)

Content:

Pauline Rule & Prologue
Sacred Scripture
Franciscan Spirituality
Trinitarian & Christo-centric
Franciscan Apostolic Life
Ritual

Forming the Formators
Core Topics 2010 (based on CIOFS)
C=CIOFS core topic

Orientation

(may require additional study in an RCIA style
program before entering Inquiry)

Content:

*The Franciscan Movement &
The Franciscan Family* [C]
The Creed [C]
Ecclesiology of the Laity [C]

Inquiry – suggest reading a bio of St Francis

Content:

What is formation [C]
Scripture & Basic Christian Doctrine [C]
Vocation & discernment [C]
Charism of founder & mission in the Church
[C]
Nature of the SFO [C]
Identity of a Secular Franciscan
Franciscan Movement 2
Discuss insights from a bio of Francis

Candidacy

Content:

Our Rule (3 sessions)
JPIC (1or 2 sessions)
Conversion – penitential movement [C]
Francis approach to God [C]
PROFESSION (2 sessions) [C]
Franciscan Tradition & Spirituality
Fraternity [C]
Francis & Blessed Mother
St. Clare
History of SFO [C]
GC & Statutes—study guides available at
www.nafraformation.org

NB – topics in italics are still being written

The Canonization of St. Camilla Battista of Varano The Newest Franciscan Saint

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

It was October 17, 2010. I was at St. Peter's Square in Rome for the papal Mass to canonize six saints including St. Camilla Battista of Varano (1458-1524), a Poor Clare nun from Camerino, Italy. I arrived an hour early, and the scene was the usual mix of the sacred and profane when large throngs of pilgrims, tourists, and the curious come together for a huge papal event. A group of Australian pilgrims led by an Asian priest had cut in line, provoking a heated reaction from an American tour manager. Several Italian nuns in full habit and some young Italian friars and veil were squabbling with Vatican police over whether or not their document in hand should allow them special entrance; it apparently did not and they went away miffed. As the line finally began to move towards the metal detectors, shoving, elbowing, and jostling were widespread. A pilgrim next to me, observing the disorder, recalled Jesus's admonition that the first will be last. All the while, various pilgrim groups could be heard quietly praying the rosary or joyfully singing hymns, blissfully unfazed by (or peacefully ignoring) the rudeness and haste around them.



30



I was blessed to have received a special ticket granting me a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to sit in the "sagrato" or seating area near Pope Benedict XVI. Just after I sat down, the former prime minister of Australia with his entourage was seated a few rows in front of me. Soon after, dignitaries, delegations, and royalty from all over the world were paraded in from within St. Peter's portico and seated nearby. Escorted by tuxedo-clad, elderly Italian gentlemen, they were splendidly dressed in ceremonial uniforms adorned with medals, sashes, coattails and hats.

On the opposite side of the "sagrato" dozens of cardinals and bishops soon processed in and filled the white travertine with a sea of red and purple.

By 10:00 a.m. the entire square and half the Via della Conciliazione were packed with people. Estimates put the crowd at over 100,000. Soon four Swiss guards came out from under the portico in full Renaissance uniform with helmet, lance and sword, and solemnly marched to their posts where they would remain motionless for the next two hours. Then everyone stood up as the papal procession began

from the square. Leading were the priests followed by bishops, archbishops, and cardinals with their tall miters—all in white chasubles. Finally, I saw Pope Benedict XVI elevated several feet above the crowd gliding gracefully along in his "popemobile." After incensing the altar, he ascended to his papal throne at the highest place in the "sagrato." Over the next two hours, the Mass was a magnificent liturgical blend of choir music, chant, prayer, incense, pomp, and splendor – all flawlessly orchestrated. I was there because of the Poor Clare nuns of Camerino who safeguard Camilla's relics and memory.

(Continued on page 31)

(Continued from page 30)

Over the past few years my wife and I had become close friends with them and they had given me the special pass. As the events wore on, I couldn't help notice that St. Camilla seemed to be the least known of the six saints: her biography was last in the booklet; her banner was positioned at the end of St. Peter's façade; and she received the lightest applause from the crowd when her name was announced. I compared her place to those pilgrims jostling to be first in line, and thought of the second part of Jesus's admonition: "The last shall be first." Surely Camilla would not have minded being last, as she was a follower of Francis and Clare who sought to be lesser servants of the least, in imitation of Christ.

A year earlier, I had been asked by the sisters to translate some of her writings into English. In that work I came to know her fairly well; in fact, she became like a spiritual director to me. Camilla played an important role in the 16th century as a woman within the Strict Observant Franciscan reform. She was an ascetic and mystic who wrote religious meditations and reflections on the cross. Her love for Jesus was so intense that she wished to be with her beloved where He was – on the cross. She desired to enter the heart of God and drown in His suffering, and in this she was mystically consoled.

Some of her writings can be difficult to understand today, as our post-Vatican II Church has largely moved away from penance and suffering. Nonetheless, Camilla's writings remain powerful reflections and have been meditated on by figures such as St. Philip Neri and Cardinal Borromeo, former bishop of Milan.

"Ask God for this wonderful revelation:

May He reveal yourself to you,
may He make you know
who you are,
how much you can do,
how much you know,
and how much you are worth.

Without this revelation,
no one can become a saint."

St. Camilla Battista of Varano

One of her meditations has always remained with me: she wrote in *Instructions to a Disciple* that when someone offends us, we should be upset not because of *our* injury, but because of *God's* injury, and that they have put their own soul in danger. In Camilla I have gained not only an intercessor, but an example, a friend, a guide.

For more information on St. Camilla or the sisters of Camerino, visit www.saintcamillabattista.it

For her writings (including her autobiography), contact me and I can email them to you free of charge.

REGIONAL ROUND UP—FRATERNAL SHARING

FRANCISCAN PILGRIMAGE

by JOANNE GARDNER, SFO

St. Elizabeth Fraternity, Chippewa Falls, WI

On August 12–15, 2010, ten St. Elizabeth Fraternity members journeyed by bus to the Hospital Sisters' Health System in Springfield, Illinois as part of the 125th year celebration of the arrival of the Sisters to St. Joseph's Hospital in Chippewa Falls, WI. Sr. Frances Elizabeth Schmitz OSF, welcomed our arrival at the CHIARA CENTER, a Franciscan place of spirituality to discover God's healing presence and peace.

Deane Rubenzer was our hostess on the bus with about 50 passengers making the journey. They were present and former hospital employees, 'Friends of St. Joseph's and Sacred Heart Hospital' in Eau Claire, WI, and our Secular Franciscan group. We attended/toured the following places of interest: • Mass at St. Clare of Assisi Chapel • Tour of the Church and Motherhouse grounds • Bus visit to Mission Outreach • Tour of St. John's Hospital • Tour of Abraham Lincoln Museum and Presidential Library. Many of the group had worked with these now retired Sisters and everyone enjoyed dining with them, sharing stories, memories and laughter!



Front-Seated, L-to-R: Veronica Willand, Karen Edstran, Judy Paquette, Minister; Jeanne Picotte
Back-Standing: Judy Kucera, Mary Jane & Terry Griffin, Joanne Gardner, Formation; Sister Frances Elizabeth, and Joe Oberweis

CONGRATULATIONS



FRIAR PRIMO P. PISCITELLO, OFM, who was confirmed as the new Provincial Minister of the Immaculate Conception Province, NYC, on November 22, 2010. The decree from the General Administration of the Order stated that the resignation of Provincial Minister-elect Antonio Nardoianni, OFM, had been accepted and subsequently, according to the general legislation of the Church and the Order that the General Definitorium had elected Friar Primo to serve a six year term as Provincial Minister.

WELCOME TO NEW FAN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



The Franciscan Action Network, (FAN) announced the hiring of Patrick Carolan as its new Executive Director. According to FAN Board of Directors President Sr. Margaret Mary Kimmins, OSF: "After conducting an extensive national search the Board is pleased to bring Mr. Carolan, who has a wealth of experience in administration, public policy, leadership and fund raising combined with a strong Catholic faith tradition and a Franciscan heart on board as Executive Director."

Mr. Carolan currently resides in Stratford, CT with his wife and children. He currently works for the Diocese of Bridgeport as Manager of Advancement/Development for the Stamford Catholic Schools and at St James Parish in Stratford where he is involved in developing Faith Formation and Social Justice Programs. Previously he has served as president of a Connecticut State Employee Union, has held senior/executive level positions in Medicaid Managed Care companies and has served on numerous boards and commissions both in Connecticut and nationally, dealing with public policy issues.

Sr. Margaret Mary also offered thanks and gratitude on behalf of the Board to Father Larry Janezic, OFM, who is concluding his term as Interim Executive Director and is preparing to return to pastoral work in a parish in Indianapolis, IN. According to Sr. Margaret Mary: "Father Larry helped FAN grow to a nationally recognized action network. We are sorry to see him leave and wish him God's peace."

**CONGRATULATIONS AND WELCOME
NEWLY ELECTED: ALICE CREWS, SFO**

Regional Minister
Juan de Padilla Region
Independence, Missouri

A NOTE FROM

FR. LARRY JANEZIC, OFM



It has been a joy to assist in the development of *FAN* for the past two years and for the last year as the Interim Executive Director. It is an awesome dream to image the Franciscan family coming together to have an impact on public policy in the Franciscan spirit.

I have been inspired by the insight and determination of the members of the *Franciscan Action Network* in the demonstration of the spirit of Francis and Clare to public policy and transformation.

On the completion of my term as Interim Executive Director I will be moving on to parish work in Indianapolis, IN.

I left parish work twelve years ago to direct Franciscan Outreach in Chicago for nine years. The combination of directing homeless services in Chicago and directing an effort to develop a network for advocacy at FAN has been a rich experience in the ministry of social outreach within the Church in the Franciscan style, with all of its joys and challenges.

I am grateful to the Board, the Action Center Staff, and the Franciscan Family for their collaboration in making the Franciscan Gospel spirit alive in our demonstration of God's love to the poor and the vulnerable. To the extent that the Franciscan family does this, FAN will have an exciting future.

If you are ever in Indianapolis, look me up.
Sacred Heart Church
1530 Union Street
Indianapolis, IN 46225

**SECULAR FRANCISCANS OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST FRATERNITY
INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI**



The Son of Justice and Mercy shown brightly Sunday morning, October 10, as the Secular Franciscans of the Holy Eucharist gathered at the Franciscan Prayer Center for their first triennial election. Father Felix Petrovsky, OFM Cap, our Regional Spiritual Assistant had driven from Colorado Springs, CO to preside at and confirm the election, assisted by Alice Crews, SFO, our Regional Secretary who chaired the election.

Father Felix opened the election process with prayer and a solemn admonition to professed members that they should give serious thought before declining a nomination to serve. After Clarissa Grill, nomination chair, read the name for each position then, nominations were taken from the floor for the position. Our fraternity is a recognized body of the Catholic Church and as we moved through the election process, we followed a process similar to elections held by religious communities around the world.

Congratulations to the Council commissioned by the professed members to animate the fraternity.

Minister Claudia Kauzlarich; Vice Minister Stanley Sikorski; Secretary Elizabeth Dietrich; Treasurer Alice Goergen; Formation Director Cheryl O'Neil; Councilor Mary Belanger; Councilor Clarissa Grill; Councilor Carol Sikorski; Councilor Trini Velasquez; Councilor Donna Weathers.



Fr. Criscitelli and Fr. Kunnel sign the document of establishment

**SAINT
ALPHONSA
FRATERNITY
CANONICALLY
ESTABLISHED**

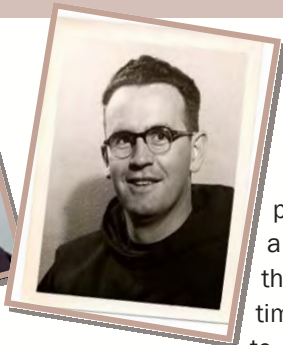


Fraternity members with Father Tom at the reception

On October 10, 2010 after seven years of preparation, discernment, candidacy and profession, the emerging fraternity of Saint Alphonsa was accepted into the Secular Franciscan Order of the United States. At a Mass concelebrated by Fr. Thomas Kunnel, TOR and Fr. Anthony Criscitelli, TOR, the document of canonical establishment was signed by the celebrants and the Minister Teresa Ecker, SFO. Fr Criscitelli, as the Delegate of the Provincial Minister of Immaculate Conception Province, Fr. Patrick Quinn, TOR, welcomed the fraternity into "Life Giving Union" with the Third Order Regular at a small reception after Mass. St Alphonsa Fraternity is part of the Queen of Peace Region and holds their meetings at the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Columbia Heights, Minnesota. They have 15 active members and six inquirers. Fr. Thomas Kunnel, TOR is the Spiritual Assistant.

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE, TEXAS FRANCISCAN RETREAT

The St. Francis Mission Sisters hosted a retreat for the SFO in West Texas this past June 12, 2010. The peaceful Our Lady of the Angels Convent by Lubbock, TX, was the site of this uplifting event attended by fraternities from Midland-Odessa, Plainview and Lubbock. Sr. Celine Thames, OSF, and Sr. Mary Ann Mishurda, OSF, were the presenters on "Living as Pilgrims: Fixing our Gaze on Christ." Both of our presenters have made pilgrimages to Assisi, and their insights were a blessing to us. Sr. Mary Ann shared the differences between a mere journey and a pilgrimage. The biggest lesson of the day was that as SFO we are on a life-long pilgrimage. As pilgrims in ongoing conversion, we are called forth with expectations of finding meaning in all that we do. We are awed by the presence of the Holy as we go forward towards our Heavenly home.



FR. PETER SHERIDAN, OFM

died November 3, 2010 at Holy Name Friary. The 97-year-old was senior friar by religious profession of Holy Name Province.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at St. Anthony Church, in Butler, NJ. Provincial Vicar Dominic Monti, OFM, was principal celebrant and homilist. Interment followed at Mount Calvary Cemetery in Butler.

Fr. Sheridan had recently celebrated 75 years as a Franciscan earlier this year, was a priest for 59 years, and had been recognized in the *TAU-USA* magazine under the *Classic Franciscan* section, Fall 2010 issue, pg 23.

Since his biography was published in the last issue of *TAU-USA*, we offer you this article penned by Fr. Peter. It appeared in the '94 March issue of *The Anthonian* titled: *Journeys to Franciscan Life*, where he reflects on his life as a Franciscan. —*Editor*



A REFLECTION ON HIS FRANCISCAN LIFE (1994)

by Fr. Peter Sheridan, OFM

I was a freshman at Seton Hall University in 1932, preparing to take a pre-med course, when someone gave me a book to read on St. Francis of Assisi. That started me thinking seriously about the Franciscan way of life. At the time, I didn't know any friars. The following year, I made a trip to St. Francis Church in New York to visit the Franciscans.

Fr. Edmund Murphy, OFM, met me and suggested we do our talking over a cup of coffee. Not long afterwards, Fr. Mathias Faust, OFM, Provincial of Holy Name Province at the time, joined us. Our talk centered on Franciscan life as a priest or brother. I was touched to think the Provincial took time out of his busy schedule to meet with me. As a result of my visit, I applied to the seminary.

In the more than 50 years since my ordination, I have worked in a number of ministries. Twenty years were spent in our southern missions. My first assignment was as assistant in our Franciscan parish in Lenoir, in western North Carolina. Shortly after my arrival, the pastor and I paid a visit to the bishop of Raleigh, who told us that the history of the Church in the South was a sad one. Because of a lack of priests and churches, many Catholics were unable to persevere in their faith. The area assigned to our care was eight mountain counties with an estimated population of 130,000 of whom only about 100 were Catholics.

The pastor offered Mass on Sundays in Lenoir for about 40 people. My schedule called for a 100-mile round trip with three stops for Masses. The average attendance for the Masses, usually in homes, was about 25. During the week, I made trips to instruct children and to conduct adult study groups. For a few years I offered Mass in the office of the Holy Mountain Hatchery in Wilkesboro, NC, for some 10 people.

In 1952, the Province assumed pastoral care of eight counties in the southwest corner of Georgia. I was named pastor of St. Augustine Church in Thomasville, as the center for the friars' parochial outreach. The Province opened a new novitiate house in 1955, St. Raphael's, in Lafayette, NJ, the fulfillment of a dream for Fr. John Forest Loviner of St. Anthony's Guild. I was novice master for nine years until 1964. Over the next 20 years, I served as provincial councilor, hospital chaplain and did further ministry in Georgia.

Since 1976, it has been a rewarding experience for me to work with a number of Secular Franciscan fraternities in Maryland and Virginia. They have helped me to deepen my commitment to the ideas and ideals of St. Francis. Their abiding love for the Church and their loyalty to her have impressed me. They are serious about living their profession which binds them more intimately to the Church, as their Rule declares, and calls them to go forth as witnesses and instruments of her mission among all people in proclaiming Christ by their life and words.

As part of my golden jubilee of ordination, I visited the places in the South I had cared for as a young priest. In towns where I had offered Mass for a few Catholics in homes, today there are churches and resident pastors. Boone, NC, where I had offered Mass in the home of Edna and Maurice O'Sullivan, the only resident Catholics, has a Catholic population today of over 360, a church and a pastor. Recalling the words of the Raleigh bishop, I realized that our Franciscan presence to so few Catholics years ago preserved a community ready to greet the influx of Catholics to the South as part of the Sun-belt Movement of the '70s and '80s. I am grateful to God for my Franciscan vocation that gave me an opportunity to share in the life of the Church and our Province these 50-plus years.



**SPIRIT
AND
LIFE
TEAM
(SALT)**



JOURNEY FOR GROWTH

Over the weekend of September 10–12, approximately sixty members of various fraternities throughout the **BLESSED JUNIPERO SERRA REGION** participated in the S.A.L.T. formation experience to enliven and strengthen fraternity life. The focus of the Spirit and Life weekend was to take an inward look at profession and fraternity life, and to discover how to let go of what is not life giving (conversion) and to embrace that which enhances life (the spiritual journey). The weekend's three major themes were:

1. Relationships – with God and each other
2. Conversion – relinquishing what is not of God
3. Giftedness – the realization that we already have everything we need

We began by revisiting our profession experiences and from there, recognizing changes over time that are a natural part of our spiritual journey, a “journey for growth.” The presenters pointed out that keeping fraternities alive takes work. One might say it is like a pot of soup, where all the goodies have sunk to the bottom. It is the fraternities work to stir the pot, bring back to the top all the goodies – talents, gifts, and dreams. It was pointed out that a fraternity was like a jigsaw puzzle. Each piece (person) is different, but together make a beautiful picture.

One of our challenges is to explore how the values of Francis and Clare can be lived in our secular lives in the world today. Secular Franciscans are called to be in the world for others, not just on a personal spiritual journey. We are called to rekindle that fire that was so evident at our profession and to help reenergize the Order.



The weather fortunately had cooled off somewhat for the weekend of August 27-29 in Independence, Missouri, at the Franciscan Prayer Center. The SALTeam (Rev. Steve Gross, OFM Conv, Richard Morton, SFO, Pat Brandwein-Ball SFO, and Patti Reynolds, SFO) was rarin’ to go, ready to meet the crowd of almost 50 Secular Franciscans from all three states (plus Arkansas) in the **JUAN DE PADILLA REGION**.

One idea was presented in several different ways, but the advice was the same: **THE STATUS QUO IS NOT WORKING; WE HAVE TO CHANGE!** God gives each of us the gifts we need, and He gives us the strength to use these gifts. Each person in a fraternity has a special gift—that gift should be used to serve the fraternity to the fullest extent possible. “Expect to be used, humbled, and canonized.”

One question popped out: “What does the Church want of me as an SFO?” What is the fraternity leadership asking me to do? And it all boils down to one thing: **FORMATION**—the stuff that makes us different from other baptized Christians! The inquirer/candidate is telling us: “I am here to be fed and you’re not feeding me!” Several attendees expressed dissatisfaction with their initial formation; some felt cheated.

All four members of the team emphasized using the international web site www.ciofs.org and checking the monthly ongoing formation project. Each month’s write-up has three parts: theme, spiritual insight, and social doctrine. The current topic, begun in June 2010, is “A Sense of Belonging to the Secular Franciscan Order.” Check it out.

MOTHER CABRINI REGION



This past August 22, 2010 was a joyous day for our fraternity. We celebrated the professions of **Christine Konie** and **Kathleen Michalek. Marita Finley, SFO**, celebrated her Golden Jubilee.

The celebration was held at St. Germaine Church in Oak Lawn, IL. Fr. Larry Dreffein, OFM was the Celebrant. Many family and friends attended this joyous occasion.

SR. JANET CORCORAN, OSF



Sr. Janet celebrated her Golden Jubilee on November 10 at St. Mary of the Assumption Church in Santa Maria, CA. Sr. Patricia Rayburn, OSF, Provincial Minister of the Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity, gave the welcoming address. Monsignor Emigdio Herrera was the celebrant at the Mass.

Sr. Janet is Vice President of Mission Services at Marian Medical Center in Santa Maria. In 1940, the Sisters responded to the call for a need for a hospital in Santa Maria with the opening of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Hospital.

In 1967, the Sisters opened what is presently Marian Medical Center, a member hospital of Catholic Healthcare West.

Sr. Janet is politically active, especially in the areas of peace and justice, and environmental issues. You may know her as the Green Franciscan Sister who has had articles published in the *TAU-USA*. Sister also sponsors a Peace Week in Santa Maria that includes the local religious community, the local government and the local school children.

FRANCISCAN MISSION SERVICE CELEBRATES 20 YEARS

The *FMS* marked 20 years of international lay mission on October 23, 2010, with a celebration that began with a morning retreat led by Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM, renowned speaker and author. He discussed "Fostering a Contemplative Practice for Compassionate Servant" and gave the keynote address "How To Be in a World that Does" at the awards dinner. The event which attracted some 400 people featured music by Andinay, a silent auction and closing blessing.

Franciscan Mission Service established its first lay missionary formation program in 1989 and in 1990 sent its first class of lay missionaries to Africa. The evening was both a reunion for returned missionaries and former staff, and an opportunity to introduce FMS' rich history and vision to a wider audience.

TRANSITUS 2010

St. Francis Parish, Colorado Springs, Colorado

October 3rd, St. Francis Parish, the Sisters of St. Francis, the Order of Friar Minors, and the Secular Franciscan Order of Colorado Springs celebrated the Transitus of St. Francis of Assisi. The *Transitus* celebrated by Franciscans and Franciscan hearted people around the world each year, was celebrated the evening prior to the Feast of St. Francis. The evening included readings about St. Francis, Holy Scripture, a procession on the grounds of St. Francis and a shared meal.



L-to-R: DJ Walker, SFO, Cathleen Campaigne Candidate, Sr. Carmela Trujillo, OSF, Phil Peloquin Candidate, Mary Blair Candidate, Laura Hughes, SFO, and Tony Valerio, SFO



All gathered at the celebration witnessed the Rite of Admission for three Candidates of the Secular Franciscan Order. These Candidates will continue their Franciscan studies for another eighteen months before making their final profession and permanently entering the Secular Order.

Deanna Crabb, SFO

by

PATTI NORMILE, SFO



L -to-R: Newscaster,
Norma Rashid;
Deanna Crabb;
Barb Anderson,
Director of MariElders

When Deanna Crabb, “Dee” to most people, attended a Senior Citizen Hall of Fame banquet in September, 2010, she knew she was being recognized for her work with the MariElders Center for Adults in Mariemont, Ohio.

What she did not realize was that she had been selected for citywide recognition for the entire Greater Cincinnati area.

Dee, a member of Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity in Holy Trinity Region, joined MariElders in 2001, but her kindness to her children, neighbors, church, fraternity and many others far precedes that time. Having just turned 70, Dee is active in St. Margaret of Cortona church where she lectures, helps with Communion and assists in planning funeral services. She helps prepare food and personal care items for Catholic Worker House and Tender Mercies.

When asked what led her to the Franciscan life, Dee stated that there was no particular event ... It must have been the caring relationship of (the Fraternity) members ...

She has been a volunteer driver for many years for those who require transportation to medical appointments and other out of the way places they need to go.

Dee serves her fraternity in countless ways. She frequently leads Evening Prayer, and has served as treasurer and councilor for the fraternity. The fraternity prayer group is vital to her. When asked what led her to the Franciscan life, Dee hesitated. She says there was no particular event that led her to the Franciscans in 1965. It must have been the caring relationship of members who enabled her and her husband to get to meetings when they had no car. She recalls the huge meetings of those days. She cherishes the Franciscans who welcomed them back when they returned to church and to the fraternity.

The Franciscans have shown her that when things go wrong, it's okay.

They welcome you always and allow you to begin again.

Gift making for hospitalized children began Dee's decades long ministry of linking prayer with meaningful gifts. When she hears of someone newly diagnosed with cancer, a CareBear just might be in the making. Her CareBears, beautifully created of varied fabrics, twinkling eyes, outreaching arms, are stuffed with love. Prayers for the recipient are assured.

As the five Crabb children were growing up, Dee and husband Bob coached and refereed softball, soccer and basketball. Rearing children took a toll on Dee's family. A rebellious daughter's drug and alcohol usage caused Dee, who is a convert to the faith, to leave the Church for six years after she had been professed as a Secular Franciscan. Finally seeking help through Alcoholics Anonymous and Adult Children of Alcoholics, Dee rediscovered her Higher Power who is Jesus, her best friend.

Returning to the Catholic church, she found acceptance in the Franciscan spirit.

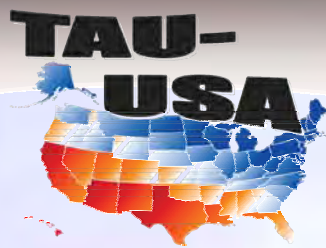
She recalls a time when she was driving to a Mass and meeting when she ran out of gas.

It took some time to get her car up and running again and she proceeded to the gathering. Discovering that the fraternity had waited for her was a humbling and gratifying experience she will not forget. The Franciscans valued her as a person.

Those five children have graced Dee's life with an even dozen grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Her role as mother and grandmother is blessed by her devotion to Mary whom she says is her support and who leads her ever closer to Jesus.

Dee's friendly smile and heart felt hugs bless many lonely people with the gift of human touch.



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Wherever you see the spirit of St Francis at work in the world, in your lives, and in your hearts—we want to hear from you. Come Share With Us.



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