
The National Fraternity
of
THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER



Issue Number 3

THE NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

Spring, 1994

What's New?

Exciting things are happening around the National Fraternity. Since October I have spent many weekends traveling the country, visiting Secular Franciscans at Regional/ Provincial and other gatherings. I am encouraged and excited by the energized spirit I find. There seems to be a new vigor, a new vitality, a greater thirst than ever to live the Rule in a more authentic and well balanced way. I feel the wind of the Spirit gently urging us on to a more active, apostolic oriented living of the Gospel life.

I have presided at six Regional/ Provincial Fraternity elections and have been impressed with every one of the new councils. Those who voted did a fine job discerning who were the most qualified to serve the Fraternity. They realized that our leaders need to be future oriented, respecting and learning from the past, but not living in it or wishing to return to it.

The presence of this forward looking leadership is encouraging. Those elected to office need to be people with a vision

of what the Order living out the Pauline Rule is to be about. They must be "refounding" types of persons, unafraid of change or innovation within the boundaries of Rule and Constitutions.

Coupled with the inspired leadership is growing recognition that quality formation programs are the most important ingredient to our future effectiveness. Good formation programs will build strong, enduring foundations to carry us into the next millenium.

New emphasis is being placed on the human and social character of candidates who seek admission to the Order. Initial formation programs are increasing the importance of the discernment process in addressing the whole person, first as

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Praise Be My Lord for Our Sister Tree

Franciscans at the United Nations encourage tree plantings in honor of UN World Environmental

Day. The day was June 5 but fraternities may still seek a donation from district conservationist, municipal arborist or nursery to plant in a suitable public location, perhaps near where your fraternity meets. Make the planting a fraternity event--invite the media, place a plaque, conduct a planting liturgy. Trees make our air more breathable, our world more beautiful and provide havens for wildlife.

National Assistants Build SFO Unity

The National Spiritual Assistants to the Secular Franciscan Order broke new ground for national cooperation in the United States by approving a standardized process for beginning new SFO communities at their meeting in San Antonio, Texas, in February.

A three-level process allows for development of newly forming groups attached to established fraternities and for a three-year experimental state for semi-autonomous emerging communities before becoming officially established fraternities according to church law. Documents will be sent after review by the NAFRA Executive Council in June.

The National Assistants also approved guidelines for the provincial spiritual assistant in cooperation with a regional executive council to deactivate fraternities

that are no longer viable, suspend fraternities in default, and to officially reactivate fraternities that have revived. Each set of guidelines details the reason for the action to be taken, the procedure to be employed, and consequences of the action. The guidelines aim to unify efforts of regional fraternities in working together to be the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order of the United States.

Participants also produced a standardized text for verifying canonical establishment of a fraternity which has lost its official documentation.

The next meeting of the Conference of Spiritual Assistants will be August 8-11, 1994, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, to discuss "Expectations for Spiritual Assistance." The assistants with their provincial/regional councils are looking for creative funding for \$200 (plus transportation) per person cost.

Provincial and regional spiritual assistants will meet in St. Louis, Missouri, in September, 1994. Their focus will be on how non-friar spiritual assistants are to be chosen, prepared and certified. Non-friar spiritual assistants are becoming the norm rather than the exception. Any suggestions or ideas are welcome. What are you already doing? What would you like to see done? Send your fantastic and creative ideas by June 24 to: *Benet A. Fonck, OFM*
P. O. Box 10915
Chicago, IL 60610-0915
FAX:(312) 853-2361

St. Francis has an 800 number!
Those seeking information about becoming
Secular Franciscans may call 1-800 FRANCIS
(372-6247).

Responding to the Call--Leadership



Recently, I visited a friend who was in the hospital recovering from surgery. In the course of our conversation he posed a very profound question, "How do we get better leadership in Washington?" Herman expected a wise response due to my twenty-one years of service in the Nation's Capitol.

I pondered this question while a deep silence prevailed. My mind retreated to days of wheeling and dealing with power and great leaders of our day. Then came back that pain that used to haunt me day and night--where was the leadership and why the chase after wind? Why the decline in morality, the loss of ethics and decline of social justice and equality, the racism, the greed for economic gain. Had the system failed, and if so, why?

I searched deeply to answer Herman's question. Recalling a speech I once heard by Archbishop Sheen, the answer began to unfold. Sheen in a retreat for religious noted the "changing church" and the cycles associated with the Church. The first cycle, the fall of the Roman Empire and the great schism of the day over Christology, the historical Christ. What was His nature, was He three persons in one, etc. The second 500 years--the battle raged over the head of the Church, the great Eastern schism. The third cycle dealt with the Body of the Church, the Great Reformation--the Church being right. It was the way people lived. Today, the battle is the world in which we live. Christendom is dead! Christianity is

not! Christendom is the economic, political, moral, social and legal life of a nation as inspired by the Gospel ethic. How do we know Christendom is dead? Observe the decline in moral values as embodied in abortion, decline of the family, rise of teenage crime, use of mind altering drugs as a way of life, dishonesty in government and growing distrust in political leadership.

Thank God Christianity is not dead! Herein lies the challenge Leo the Great in a sermon (non-biblical readings for the Lenten Season: The Liturgy of the Hours, p.1979) who summed up the challenge. "The law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. In preaching the holy Gospel all should receive a strengthening of their faith. No one should be ashamed of the Cross of Christ, through which the world has been redeemed.

"No one should fear to suffer for the sake of justice; no one should lose confidence in the reward that has been promised. The way to rest is through toil, the way to life is through death."

By now, poor Herman thought I had fallen off a log. Silence prevailed. The message unfolded. If we profess to be Christians and proclaim Christianity, then it stands to reason that leadership must come from those who profess to be Christian!

We as Franciscans stand at the threshold of changing the world. The old is dead and we are struggling to give birth to the new. Our very "way of life" is the means to provide the strength to give birth to the refounding of this great gift--the Gospel life!

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RECYCLED PAPER

SOYA INK

A Quiet Place Within

This is about what I like to call, "Wow!" Spirituality. It's about solitude and the Secular Franciscan in the 20th Century as that century in completion begins to penetrate, spermatozoic-like, the egg of the 21st Century, there to produce new life. This new life will be reflective of the past, but bursting with a future pregnant with promise - a wholly unique future like that of a newborn baby. Thus the word "Wow!"--suggestive of the spirituality of a little child, gazing upward to blue sky or snow-filled sky, looking at a beautiful, mysterious world and saying an awe-struck and wide-eyed "Wow! My Daddy did this!" This is the spirituality of our Father St. Francis of Assisi. As his offspring we carry his spiritual genetic imprint on our souls.

Solitude focused through the flawless lens of "Wow!" Spirituality is concerned not so much with running away to a quiet place or going on pilgrimage to some distant holy shrine as with discovering our personal "desert place" within as we go about the humdrum routines of daily life. In essence it is preoccupied with the testimony of our five senses as we come face-to-face with our "Everywhere God." The God of "sense" we sense most strongly in unexpected ways through the magnanimity of His outer Presence. We might have but a fleeting glimpse yet one so indelible that despite the din and noise that abound on a city street or in a playground where children romp, the experience is rapturous.

Our five senses permit us to see, hear, taste, touch and smell. Every sense is brimming full of "Wow!" Spirituality. In this article we will focus on smell. Did you ever smell God? Bet you a million \$\$\$ you have! Like Baskin Robbins ice cream, God comes in many "flavors" or more precisely "fragrances!"

At the seashore God visits in the smell of the salty surf, sand, seaweed and the briny fragrances of sealife. At the shore, sensing God through the sense of smell one hears in the heart Jesus speaking at the Galilean seashore, "You are the salt of the earth!" Jesus' words bouyant on whiffs of saline incense lift us to the sky. Like Jonathan Livingston Seagull we soar to unimagined heights, solaced in the embrace of "Wow!" Spirituality. We have found our "quiet place" within. As children shout in their gleeful games of play and radios in the sand blare their gaudy forms of entertainment, we stand in wide-eyed wonder. Bless us, O Lord, and this Thy gift of smell!

A summertime walk through a garden is another place to experience God through our sense of smell. This walk can bring back childhood memories of a special rose garden in a far-away place where the fragrance of God abounded. Remembering God through the sense of smell provides moments of solitude--moments of "Wow!" Spirituality that put you in touch with your personal "quiet place" within yourself.

Try it, dear sisters and brothers in St. Francis. You'll never be quite the same again for you will have discovered "Wow!" Spirituality. You will say in wonder and awe, "Wow! My Daddy did all of this!"



Bruce Snowden, SFO
Minister of St. Mary Fraternity,
a man with the heart of a poet,
Yonkers, NY

Let Mankind Learn

Remembering that St. Francis is the patron saint of ecology, fraternities may consider sending a representative to The National Ecology Commission's National Ecology Apostolate Leadership Training Conference, September 3-9, 1994, at the Franciscan's Graymoor Christian Unity Center, Garrison, New York.

Speakers include: **Fr. Camillus MacRory**, OFM Cap, President of the Conference of Spiritual Assistants, SFO USA; **Fr. Thomas Berry**, CP, author, featured contributor to "The New Cosmology," founder of The Riverdale Center for Religious Research; **Dr. Richard Clapp**, epidemiologist and executive director of JSI Center for Environmental Health Studies; **Merritt Clifton**, journalist and editor of "Animal People" **Dr. Paul Connett**, chemist and founder of "Work on Waste, U.S.A."; **Lois Marie Gibbs**, author of Love Canal: My Story, executive director of Citizens Clearing House for Hazardous Waste, Inc.; **Dr. Peter Montague**, Director Environmental Research Foundation, editor, "Rachel's Hazardous Waste News"; and **Charles Spencer**, SFO, Chairman of National Ecology Commission.

Cost is \$210 (double occupancy). A limited number of single rooms are available for \$230. Make checks payable to: "NEC." Mail to :
National Ecology Commission
107 Jensen Circle
Springfield, MA 01089-4451

Please note that The National Newsletter has a new subscription manager. Thanks to Dolores Smelko for undertaking this task. Send changes of address and new subscriptions to:

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

Have you considered a subscription to The National Newsletter for each member of your fraternity? See back page for information.



Franciscans Network sent the above photo with a letter from the sister in charge of the convent at Zagreb where the five sisters who had been held in Bosnia are now resting. "Thank you very much for your intervention, for all you did to set our sisters from Fojnica free....we felt how great [it] is to have such a lot of brothers and sisters thinking of us, praying for us and supporting us in all our troubles...May we keep joint in our prayers. God bless you!" The prayer effort organized by Franciscans Network cost over \$1400 in communication costs. Donations to assist with that endeavor can be sent to Franciscans Network, 1615 Vine St., Cincinnati, OH 45210.

Franciscan Family Apostolate

Individuals or fraternities interested in supporting a family in India through the Franciscan Family Apostolate (see The National Newsletter, Fall, 1993), may receive information by filling out and returning the following request to:

Alan Ouimet, SFO
Franciscan Family Apostolate
303 Church Street
Guilford, Ct. 06437

Dear Alan: Please send me information on joining the Franciscan Family Apostolate.

Name _____
Fraternity _____
Address _____

Hacia Un Mejor Entendimiento

por Juan F. Lezcano, SFO

Yo naci el 6 de Diciembre de 1959 en Cuba y en el 23 de Abril de 1969, mi mama, mi hermana y yo llegamos a los Estados Unidos.



Mirando hacia atras, yo me recuerdo de ese tiempo con tristeza y alegria. Con tristeza, porque yo deje a mi papa, el resto de mi familia y mis amigos, a los que nunca posiblemente volvere a ver. Con alegria, porque era una oportunidad para vivir en libertad.

Cuando llegamos a Miami, fuimos a vivir con el hermano de mi mama y su familia. La casa estaba en lo que habia sido un vecindario de la clases media angloamericana, pero que con la llegada de los cubanos los residentes originales se mudaron del area, excepto un pareja mayor de edad ue vivian cerca de nosotros. Antes de que mi mama pudiera comunicarse con ellos, ella pensaba que ellos eran diferentes. Lo que hizo que mi mama pensara asi fue el siguiente episodio:

Esta pareja tenia unos arboles de fruta en su patio, que producia diferentes frutas pero que nunca las recogian, en cambio se echaban a perder en la rama o que con el tiempo se caian al suelo, donde los pajaros y las ardillas se las comian o teminaban en la basura.

No fue hasta que yo aprendi ingles, que mi mama me pidio que le preguntara a esa pareja acerca de las frutas. Fue entoce cuando supimos el porque las frutas nunca eran recogidas. La razon era porque ellos eran alergicos a esas frutas y como no hablaban espanol y eran muy timidos no se atrevian a preguntarnos si queriamos las frutas.

Recordando el pasado, yo pienso que esta fue un paso positivo que mi familia tomo para conocer a nuestros vecinos.

Muchos de nosotros tenemos un concepto erroneo de las personas que no conocemos y que

son diferentes a nosotros. Por ejemplo, los hispanos al igual que otras monorias somos vistos con deficiencia en las siguientes areas: pobreza socioeconomica, carentes de educacion, con desajustes sociales, corrupcion, ademas que se tiene la imagen de que los hispanos somos traficantes or consumidores de drogas.

Muchos de los aspectos positivos que tambien se han ignorado son: las familias hispanas son generalmente muy unidas; dependen my poco en el sistema de asistencia publica del gobierno; el grupo hispano tiene un alta porcentaje de buena salud y en el aspect educacional los hispanos estan desarrollandose cada dia mas y estan explorando nuevos campos en la educacion y tecnologia.

Otros aspectos positivos del grupo hispano es que, ademas de la participacion laboral en un grupo con mejor longevidad que otras razas. Nos ninos latinos por ejemplo cuando so comparan con otros ninos tienen un alto porcentaje de vivir con su papa y su mama en la misma casa. En la segunda generacion los hispanos han avanzado educacionalmente al mismo nivel que los angloamericanos. Ahora, nosotros debemos cambiar la imagen del hispano. No los debemos ver como un objeto de preocupacion, en cambio como artesanos en el desarrollo de la fraternidad, la iglesia, y la sociedad.

Ellos brindan a la sociedad de hoy confianza en trabajos y religion que esta basada en una fe y una cultura de muchos siglos.

Juan F. Lezcano, SFO fue profesado el 6 de Abril de 1986 con su esposa Karen en Tokyo, Japan, como miembros de la Provincia de San Juan Bautista en Cincinnati, OH. Cuando volvieron a los Estados Unidos se trasladaron a la Fraternidad de Santa Francisca Cabrini en Tacoma, KWA. El a servido como Viceministro de la Provincia de Santa Barbara y Secretario de la Region de los Trovadores de Pas y esta terminando su puesto como Ministro de la Fraternidad de Santa Francisca Cabrini. Juan y Karen tienen cuatro ninos y tres ninas de un ano a trece anos.

Toward a Better Understanding

by Juan F. Lezcano, SFO

I was born December 6, 1959, in Cuba, and on April 23, 1969, my mother, my sister, and I came to the United States.



I recall this time both with sadness and joy. Sadness, because I left behind a father, grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins and friends, which most likely I would never see again. Joy, because this was an opportunity to truly experience freedom.

When we arrived, we went to live with my mother's brother and his family. The house was in what used to be a middle class Anglo neighborhood, but since the influx of Cubans, most of the original residents had left the area except for the elderly couple who lived next door. Before my mother was able to communicate with them, she thought they were odd. What led my mother to think this way was due to the following incident.

The elderly couple had various fruit trees in their backyard but the fruit was never picked. Instead, it would spoil on the branch and eventually fall to the ground, where it would be eaten by the birds and squirrels or be thrown away.

It wasn't until I learned English, that my mother asked me to inquire about the fruits. It was then I learned why the fruit was not picked. As it turned out, they were allergic to the fruit, and not knowing Spanish, were too shy to ask if their new neighbors would want it. Looking back, I remember this moment as a time when my family took a positive step to learn about our neighbors.

Many of us have developed misconceptions of those who are different from us. I find that Hispanics, as with many minorities, are seen only in terms of deficits or dysfunctions: socioeconomic poverty, lack of schooling, social

deviance and addiction; while the strengths are overlooked: strong family orientation, high labor participation, low welfare dependency, strong health indicators and strong education improvement.

Hispanics have the highest rate of labor participation of any group in the country. They also live longer on the average than almost any other group. Hispanic children are among the most likely offspring of any U.S. group (including affluent Anglos) to remain at home with their parents until they are able to make it on their own. By the second generation, Hispanics advance educationally about as fast as mainline Anglos.

In light of this we must shift how we view Hispanics. No longer will we see them as objects of concern, but rather as individuals and skilled artisans of new developments in our fraternities, our church and our society. They bring to today's social and religious tasks a confidence and vision rooted in centuries-old faith and culture.

Juan Lezcano, SFO, was professed April 6, 1986 with his wife, Karen, in Tokyo, Japan, as members of St. John the Baptist Province, Cincinnati, OH. After returning to the states, they joined St. Francis Cabrini Fraternity in Tacoma, WA. He has served as Vice-Minister of St. Barbara Province, and Secretary of Troubadors of Peace Region; currently he is a Councilor of Troubadors of Peace Region and is completing his last year as Minister of St. Frances Cabrini Fraternity. Juan and Karen have seven children, ages one through 13.

Editor's Note: We hope our Spanish-speaking brothers and sisters will enjoy this bilingual article. We hope our English-speaking members whose high school Spanish may be a bit rusty or who do not know Spanish will savor the language by reading the parallel translations of Juan's article. Let us know what you think. We hope this will become a regular feature.

Evangelization 2000

The issues mentioned in the winter National Newsletter are still pending as this is written. They take on more urgency as Congress tries to work out meaningful reform. Health and Welfare Reform and Economic Help for Families are of primary concern. Information given below is from the U. S. Catholic Conference (USCC) for your consideration along with what you learn from the media. Contact your Senators and Congressmen by letter, visit if they are in your area, phone, fax or telegram to state your opinion as a constituent. Your opinion is important to them and to the outcome of issues.

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Health Care Reform: There are approximately 7 major Bills on health care reform before Congress which have been referred to Committees in both Houses. The final legislation should assure universal coverage and access and provide practical means to achieve it, regardless of employment status, preexisting illness, age or other criteria. The legislation must not burden needed health care reform with abortion. Abortion is not health care. Abortion destroys unborn children and divides the nation. It is not only a fundamental moral error, but also a serious policy misjudgment and political mistake to include it. It will ensure defeat of needed reform. The Bill must not force all Americans to pay for abortion. We need reform that protects the life and dignity of all. Undocumented and migrant workers also need to be covered.

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Welfare Reform: The central problem in American is not welfare but poverty. Hence, the USCC supports:

- effective employment, training, education and childcare initiatives which lead to productive work with wages and benefits that can support a family in dignity;
- welfare reform that reinforces and supports the values of family and work, offers dignity and opportunity over dependency but does not use "reform" to cut needed assistance to poor children;
- strengthening the Earned Income Tax Credit and greatly improving child support efforts;
- policies to help families stay together and progress (eg. assistance to two parent families, permitting families to keep more earnings, build assets, etc.)
- a minumum benefit that provides enough to raise children in dignity for those who cannot work, and for those who are on welfare while seeking employment, training or faising very young children;
- targeted programs for recipients with special needs (teen parents, refugees, disabled etc.).

Issues not supported are: paying for welfare reform by cutting other needed assistance to poor families, taxing benefits or anti-immigrant measures nor denying essential benefits to poor children in the name of "reform."

Welfare reform must attack poverty, not poor families. The final Bill is the Re-Employment Act, HR 4040. This bill attempts to restructure the current welfare system to provide a more effective and dignified system of assistance to the poor.

to restructure the way government aids unemployed workers by offering comprehensive training and income support. As I write, the Bill is in Committee.

Striker Replacement Bill S55 can be considered in the context of economic help to families via preserving wages and benefits that can support a family in dignity. If you support the right of workers to strike, you will be interested in the passage of this Bill. S55, the Striker Replacement Bill, would allow workers who go on strike to keep their seniority and position in the firm. Employers could still hire replacement workers but when the strike ends the replacements, not the strikers, would move to the bottom of the employment list to fill positions as they become vacant or available. If workers lose their jobs, what does it mean to have the right to strike? This Bill may come up by mid-Spring. Watch the media for its progress.

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Foreign Aid Reform: The USCC suggests:

- inclusion of "poverty alleviation" as a primary goal of US aid and of Title I Sustainable Development programs;
- the unifying goal to advance poverty alleviation and sustainable development;
- urging re-inserting language barring funding for abortions as part of family planning services;
- advocating transfer of funds under the projected "promoting peace title" from military assistance to reconstruction funds for wartorn countries, particularly in Central America;
- supporting the conditioning of all US aid on the human-rights of recipient countries.

In brief, the focus is on sustainable grassroots development and alleviating poverty and redirecting US aid from military to humanitarian objectives.

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Environmental Justice: In evaluating legislation on Environmental issues, consider:

- whether it gives affected communities and individuals access to information about toxic dumping and exposures in their neighborhoods;
- if it gathers statistics on income and toxic exposure (poor and racial and ethnic minorities are most likely to suffer from environmental neglect and degradation.);
- if legislation offers the right of petition and injunctive power to avert the setting of waste dumps in the affected area?
- if it requires non-discriminatory enforcement of environmental health and safety laws?

Keep informed about what is going on in national, state and local governing bodies. Measure everything against the Gospel and make your voice heard.

Mary C. Lahiff, Chairperson
Evangelization 2000

GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES

Mary C. Lahiff, Evangelization 2000

(Based on the U.S. Bishops' Plan for Evangelization "Go and Make Disciples")

Early in 1993 the long-awaited document, "Go and Make Disciples - A National Plan and Strategy for Catholic Evangelization in the United States" was published by the U.S. Catholic Conference. This document was developed by the Committee on Evangelization for the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and approved by U.S. Bishops for publication. It is addressed to every Catholic in the U.S., ordained and lay, every diocese, parish, Catholic organization, college, school and family. No one can claim exemption. The substance of the document has been the basis of homilies, workshops and teaching. How does relate to us as Secular Franciscans?

The Bishops remind us of the amazement, joy, elation, gladness and zeal of a few of the many people, who responding in faith on their first encounter with Jesus, could not keep the news about Him within themselves. They sang and danced for joy and spread the word to everyone they met, even though sometimes Jesus cautioned them to tell no one. It was all so new and wonderful that Bartimaeus, the centurion whose servant lay dying, the Samaritan woman at the well, Mary Magdalene could not keep quiet about it.

The Good News was so new then. Do we take it for granted now? For many around us the Good News of Jesus would still be new and wonderful if we could break out of our shell of timidity and talk about our faith experiences freely with others and explain what Jesus and His teachings mean to us in good and in difficult times.

Our Bishops speak of our own individual need for conversion as the change in our lives that comes about through the power of the

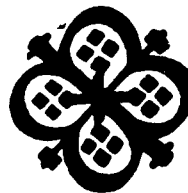
Holy Spirit. As we ponder the Gospel and accept it, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, we "put on the mind of Christ" and we reject sin. We try to think and act as He would in any given situation. We ask ourselves, "What would Jesus do?" and act accordingly.

Our Rule calls us to do Penance, constantly turn toward God, live in union with Jesus, respond to his grace, be aware of God's power and presence and promise of eternal happiness. Francis mirrored Christ; we are to do the same. "Secular Franciscans are to devote themselves especially to careful reading of the Gospel, going from Gospel to life and life to the Gospel." (Rule Ch.2) Our conversion is to be ongoing. The Gospel message is always new and exciting because we are constantly given new insights by the Holy Spirit.

Our Bishops have three goals which they wish to accomplish through this document. Goal I is that through the teaching of "Go and Make Disciples" Catholics will be so filled with the fire of the Holy Spirit and consequently with enthusiasm for Jesus, His teachings and His Church that they are impelled to share it with others.

We cannot stand still in our faith; it must continue to grow and be transformed. However, it must not remain personal and private. It must overflow from our hearts and be evident in the way we think and speak and act wherever we are--at home, in our neighborhood, at work or recreation, on vacation--at all times. Through the power of the Gospel message and the grace of God we must radiate the love of God.

(to be continued in the summer issue of The National Newsletter)





HAWAII REVISITED

Sixty-five Secular Franciscans from all over the "Mainland" gathered together for five days in February in Kilueia Volcano National Park for a Franciscan Hawaiian Experience. Bill and Francis Wicks went a week early to help prepare for the event. Arrival of participants at Hilo Airport was complete with Ti Leis and warm ALOHAs.

In opening talks "The Year of the Family" was addressed by former Family Commissioner, Gloria Schriver, who spoke about the state of the family and how Seculars can improve family life. She also presented "Clare, the Light of the Order," relating Clare's influence on Secular Franciscans. National Formation Commissioner, Ron Pihokker, shared an inspirational talk about the formation journey of Secular Franciscans.

A tour of volcano sites impressed all with the awesome power of nature in the continuing creation of the island. A trip to Akaka and Rainbow Falls ended with a stop at Hilo Hattie's for Hawaiian shirts and muumuus.

An unforgettable Sunday was spent at Honaunau Bay, the Hawaiian "City of Refuge." The day began with a Hawaiian Mass complete with liturgical hula. A tour of the famous painted church, St. Benedict's, was followed by a ride on an outrigger canoe.

A feast of delicious Hawaiian cooking was prepared by the local emerging fraternity, "Tau Kona," with the help of parishioners who assisted with the luau. A pig roasted in an imu (underground oven) was served with poi, breadfruit and local fish caught that morning in the bay by the parishioners. The feast concluded with Hawaiian fruit, cake and Kona coffee. Entertainment included learning to pound poi, learning to throw fishing nets, Hula dances by local parishioners and daring Secular Franciscans. That evening under a clear sky the group witnessed a volcano flowing into the ocean, creating new land, with all the beauty God could possibly put into His show--AWESOME!

The final full day was dedicated to talks by Gloria who presented a seminar on healing and Ron who shared more of his inspired knowledge of Franciscan formation.. An evening banquet was celebrated with Hawaiian music and dancers. Participants departed richer with new brothers and sisters and wonderful memories . Many thanks to Ken and Carole Amaral who hosted this beautiful Hawaiian experience!

The Tau Kona Fraternity has requested that the Franciscan Hawaiian Experience be repeated in two years. What do you think? Call the Amarals (808/966-9145) to let them know your interest.

Many thanks to Bill Wicks and Carole Amaral who provided this article.

("Response to the Call" continued from p. 3)

Here is where leadership is born. We can no longer just hope by electing leaders to represent us that the world will change. Those leaders will only be as effective as we are "unfearful to suffer for the sake of justice." In the spirit of minority, they should opt for relationships which give preference to the poor and to those on the fringe of society, whether these be individuals or categories of persons or an entire people; they should collaborate in overcoming the exclusions of others and those forms of poverty that are the fruit of inefficiency and injustice (General Constitution Article 19 [Rule 14, 1&2]) For Secular Franciscans should always act as a leaven in the environment in which they live through the witness of their fraternal love and clear Christian motivations."

This, my good friend Herman, is where leadership lies. You cannot transfer the power nor the gift to another unless you first possess the power and gift yourself. Let us then, go forth in the Spirit of Francis and live this Gospel life in our work. Let us find our spirituality in our work. Let our work become the transformation of the world. This, Herman, will be leadership--Christian leadership at its best.

In conclusion, we need to review our current status in life and ask ourselves:

- 1) **Do I perceive myself as a leader? If so, why? If not, why not?**
- 2) **How much am I prepared to suffer for justice?**
- 3) **How do I proclaim the holy Gospel in the environment in which I live?**

PAX ET BONUM--Yours in Christ,

Ronald A. Michieli, SFO
Chairman

Peace & Justice Commission

From the Editor:

On Holy Saturday
Father Leonard Foley, OFM,
told a friend, "Tomorrow is
Easter. Easter would be a good
day to die. I think I'll die
tomorrow." And he did. Cancer ended the
earthly life of a friend of Secular Franciscans.
Fr. Leonard, along with Fr. Jovian Weigel, wrote
The Third Order Vocation Book, a book that
while based on the old Rule, still provides a
strong basis for prayer and formation for SFOs.
His book Believing in Jesus continues as the St.
Anthony Messenger Press best seller along with
"Catholic Updates" selling in the millions. We
have lost a good friend--a wise and holy, kind
and gentle man. Father Leonard was my dear
friend, my mentor, the first Franciscan to show
me what following St. Francis could mean in my
life. May you each have a Fr. Leonard in your
life! Goodbye, Father Leonard--until we meet
again.



Hand to Hand

Appreciate yourself! Who among us would not feel worthy if he or she won a major prize or discovered a cure for a devastating disease? Yet the reality is that the "little things" in life add up to more than the greatest honor. It is not the monetary value of gifts we give to one another that really counts. It is the gentle touch of a hand or a warm hug, a listening ear or a shoulder to cry on which comprise the most valuable gifts that we can share with one another. Appreciate yourself and those around you for the "little things" done every day by which we all grow in love.

(from "Family Matters," Carol Gentile,
National Family Commission Chair)



("What's New" continued from p. 1)

human, then as Christian, and finally as Franciscan. This new direction replaces the one that was all too prevalent in the past but still lingers in a few cases, namely, that of being overly concerned with trying to increase our "numbers." As we continue to pray and work to improve the quality of our formation spirituality and programs, I am confident that the Lord will provide ever greater numbers.

On-going formation is assuming its rightful role in the life of most fraternities. We are becoming more conscious of the fact that, after profession, our growth as Franciscans must not stop. The journey is a life long journey. Many have left the Order because they were unable to experience continuing

"The most important single component in family relationships is LOVE. This is accomplished by completely convincing ourselves that God loves US, and that through that love, we can love others. "For those of us Franciscans who have promised to live our lives seeking God, by looking for Him among the trials and tribulations of family life, the road is not always easy. Such a life calls for courage and perseverance, but if westick it out, we will find that core of love and holiness that is within all that God has created. As hard as it is, this dedication to both God and Family may be the straightest path to God Himself."

Gloria Shriver

Deadline for the summer National Newsletter:-July15
Mail copy to:
Patti Normile,
Editor
609 Amherst Ave.
Terrace Park,OH
45174
FAX 513/831-2804

support in their vocation as they had expected to receive after completing the initial formation process.

I believe that more and more young people are becoming interested in the Order as they become aware that our Rule calls us to action as well as prayer. They admire our commitment to publicly live the Gospel life while infiltrating society with our values. In a desire to increase the emphasis on serving the younger generation, the National Fraternity is in the process of establishing a network of those who work with or would like to work with younger people. In fact, the establishment of a new commission focused on serving youth will be considered at the October meeting.

In the same vein, networking around the country among individuals with common interests is being encouraged and facilitated. You have undoubtedly read the notices in this and past issues of the National Newsletter regarding networks. Networking provides an opportunity for individual fraternity members to experience community, beyond their local fraternity, with other Seculars with common interests.

Please keep the leadership of the National Fraternity in your prayers as they try to find better and more effective ways to promote the Order and to serve each of you. God bless you all.

Fraternally,
Richard Morton
National Minister

Many thanks to all of you who contribute to The National Newsletter. You are making this truly YOUR NAFRA newsletter.

HAPPENINGS

*Share the Vision—
Share the Dream*
The Joliet Franciscans &
The College of St. Francis
are sponsoring
the Fourth Franciscan Institute
on

*Relationships as Modeled
by Francis and Clare*
July 10-15, 1994

Presented by Beatrice M. Eichten, OSF
Liturgist, Dennis Schafer, OFM
College of St. Francis
Joliet, Illinois (35 mi. SW of Chicago)
For additional information,
Brigid Jacobs, OSF
520 Plainfield Avenue
Joliet, Illinois 60435
815/727-7516

JOIN US IN NEW ORLEANS

All Secular Franciscans are invited to join members of St. John the Baptist Province August 4-7, at Loyola University, New Orleans, for the final Provincial Conference before regionalization is complete. Charter a bus, paddle a canoe down the Mississippi, board a train, carpool to share in addressing the theme

Bear the Imprint of the Most High:

Franciscans as a Visible Sign of the Church.

Speakers will be Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM, keynote speaker; Ron Pihokker, SFO, National Formation Chairperson; Patti Normile, SFO; Fr. Tom Speier, OFM; Cathy Miltz, SFO; Justin Carisio, SFO; and Jan Parker, SFO.

Registration: \$75; Meals: (7 includes banquet \$53)
Rooms: (3 nights) Double, \$75; Single, \$105.

Pay to 1994 Provincial Conference

Mail to: Mrs. Barbara Smith, SFO,

1994 Provincial Conference, 6348 Carlson Drive
New Orleans, LA 70122

SFO NETWORKING

Networking is a 1990s concept for building resource communities within interest groups to increase knowledge and potential of the participants. Advantages of networking as Secular Franciscans includes the opportunity to explore a profession or area of interest from a Franciscan viewpoint.

The National Fraternity is gathering names of Secular Franciscans interested in participating in networking with Seculars of similar professions or similar interests. Possible networking areas include: lawyers, medical professionals, SFO Deacons, SFO diocesan clergy, chaplains, writers, youth workers, and any others you may suggest.

If you are interested in belonging to or assisting in developing this kind of networking, please contact:

Mary K. Mazotti, SFO
National First Vice Minister
P. O. Box 2571
Arnold, CA 95223-2571
(209) 795-3809

Franciscan Journey to Mexico

October 5-13, 1994

Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs

Explore three important shrines in Mexico

Our Lady of Guadalupe

Our Lady of Zapopan

San Juan do Los Lagos

For information contact:

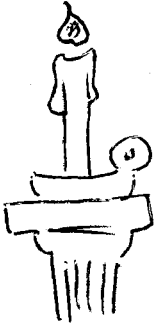
Fr. Roch Niemeier, OFM

FRANCISCAN PILGRIMAGE PROGRAMS

1648 S. 37th Street

Milwaukee, WI 53215-1724

The Lampstand



"You do not light a lamp and put it under a bushel basket. You set it on a stand where it gives light to all the house. In the same way your light must shine before others so they may see your goodness and give praise to your heavenly Father." (Matthew 5:15-16)

Never Too Old

Our local fraternities can embrace brothers and sisters of all ages to pray, work and play together. In many fraternities there are people who have given many years of service to the Order. Age and illness now curtail their physical presence at fraternity gatherings and activities. Often we hear, "I'm too old, too weak, too confined to do much of anything any more." How good God is to use all those who are willing to serve at whatever age they are! Take the case of Angela Kuker.

Angela is a widow who raised two sons. She has been a professed Secular Franciscan over twenty-eight years. Angela, a member of St. Bonaventure fraternity in Detroit, is eighty-two years old and lives in the Henry Ford Continuing Care Facility in Roseville, MI. She is confined to a wheelchair by severe arthritis that gives her constant pain.. She cannot walk and her fingers are deformed from the disease. In her younger days Angela worked as a grocery department manager. Today she is totally dependent on others for her personal care and well-being.

Yet this woman still serves God. She is grateful that once a week a priest from a neighboring parish celebrates Mass with

nursing home residents. She prays for those she loves and those who ask for prayers.



One day while talking with Sister Mary Rose who came to visit, Angela mentioned the peace and comfort that saying the rosary brought her. She wondered if other residents would like to pray together. The word went out. At first only five people came. Then more and more men and women asked to be wheeled to the recreation room to pray together. Today lay visitors now lead the rosary for about twenty-five people. It is edifying to watch the residents. They come, some with fuzzy memories unable to remember much, but their Hail Marys and Our Fathers have not been forgotten. Some, still alert, are so physically handicapped that it takes real effort to focus on the prayers. But they do, content to be with others and pray with them. This scheduled time in their week is one of the few ways left for them to give public honor and glory to God.

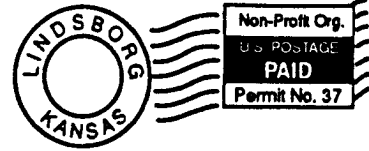
We recognize God's use of Angela Kuker and her goodness and "give praise to our heavenly Father."

Marie Amore, Councilor to CIOFS

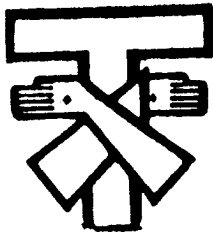
Editor's Note: Marie contributed this article and suggested that "The Lampstand" become a standing column in The National Newsletter. We think that is a splendid idea. Thank you, Marie! We need you, our readers, to write articles about special Secular Franciscans you know. . Send articles (under 350 words) to:

*Patti Normile, Newsletter Editor
609 Amherst Avenue
Terrace Park, OH 45174
FAX 513/831-2804.*

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