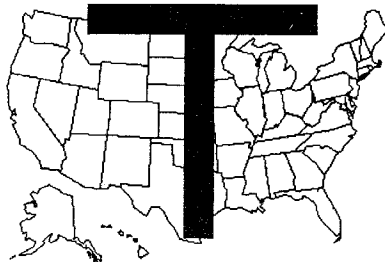


THE NATIONAL FRATERNITY
of
THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER



Newsletter

Winter, 1991

NATIONAL ELECTIONS

By direction of the International Presidency, Mrs. Gladys Michaud, SFO, CIOFS Councilor of Edmonton, Canada, was delegated to preside at and confirm the elections. Rev. Carl Schafer, OFM, Conference of General Spiritual Assistants, was the witness.

Twenty of the Friars present chose not to participate in the elections.

Elected were:

Mr. Richard Morton, SFO, Minister,
Mr. Ronald Pihokker, SFO, Vice-Minister,
Mrs. Geraldine Rome, SFO, Vice-Minister
to fulfill the unexpired term of Richard
Morton, and
Mr. John Sanborn, SFO, Treasurer.

Gladys Michaud installed the newly elected during Evening Prayer.

At a later meeting of the Executive Council, Mary Mazotti, SFO, was re-elected First Vice-Minister.

Dick Morton has served two terms as Minister of Sacred Heart Province. He was appointed by the Executive Council in 1987 to

fulfill an unexpired term of a vice-minister. He was elected to the office that fall and re-elected in 1990. Since its inception, he has also been chairman of the Regionalization Committee.

Ronald Pihokker serves as Formation Director of Holy Name Province and has been the National Vice-Minister for Formation since his first election in 1988.

Jerry Rome is Minister of the Province of St. John the Baptist and was one of the first members of the Regionalization Committee.

John Sanborn is Treasurer of Holy Name Province; this is his first National office.

FUTURE ELECTIONS

The International Presidency informed the National Directive Board that, in conformity to the new Constitutions, staggered elections must be phased out as quickly as possible. The CIOFS directive called for a full election this coming year.

A petition was sent to the International, requesting that the full election be held in

three years, because a one year term for the new Minister would be potentially unproductive.

The staggered election procedure was begun some years ago on the National level to assure continuity. However, in the last few years, there has been concern about the cost of yearly nominations, the cost the president's travel, and about the amount of time taken for the elections at each meeting.

At the 1990 elections, a letter from the International Presidency indicated that an International Councilor who was not also a candidate, would be acceptable as president. Subsequent International communications appear to indicate that the 1990 permission was an emergency measure only.

We are also scheduled for fraternal and pastoral visitations next year. Marianne Powell, SFO, National Minister of Denmark and a member of the Presidency, has been delegated fraternal visitor. Pastoral visitor has not yet been announced. Before the visitations occur, it is anticipated that our election situation will have been clarified.

JDL CHARITABLE FUND

Elizabeth M. Ryder, SFO
Editor

There are usually reports made at a Chapter that are not on the agenda; this was such a report and it was a special one. It was my tremendous privilege to make the presentations.

The response by local fraternities and provinces clearly indicated that Jim Lynch has been appreciated and that we are all aware of our obligation to help our less fortunate brothers.

As of Tuesday, October 22, the Fund had reached \$6,725.

Since that date, an additional \$125 has been received. While Jim is recovering from shock and deciding on the charity/charities, the Fund will remain intact, and further contributions will be welcomed.

In addition to the Fund, there was an estimated ten pounds of spiritual bouquets, cards, and letters. In the months preceding the meeting, as I was processing the mail, I often wished I had stock in Hallmark. The first Region, Hawaii, presented him with a green lei.

In a lighter vein, Jim was given a sparkly gold colored zucchetto, a box of tissues (in case of emotional response), a large scroll from the Province of St. Conrad with reminiscences of meetings,

We then adjourned to the recreation room for refreshments, the highlight being a large cake with the message, "Dear Jim, The count down is over."

(Those wishing to contribute, please make checks payable to JDL Charitable Fund and mail to the *Newsletter*. Deadline, January 20, 1992.)

THE RULE IN BRAILLE

The Province of St. Conrad is handling the distribution of the Rule in Braille. The basic cost is \$12.50 plus shipping/handling. Do not pay in advance. Specify the shipping: first class mail, book rate, UPS. You will be billed. Send your order to:

St. Stephen the Martyr
303 S. 3rd Street
Sterling, CO 80751
or call (303)522-0671 for more information.

THE PARDON OF ASSISI

Emanuela De Nunzio, OFS
Minister General
(Condensed from CIOFS Bulletin)

On August 2, Franciscans once again met in the Basilica of St. Francis to celebrate the holiday of the Pardon of Assisi or the Indulgence of the Portiuncula.

Let us all remember the way this indulgence was acquired: asked for by the Saint with his typical simplicity and humility; conceded by the Holy Father Honorius III, as a dedication to the spreading of the faith.

The many crowds of pilgrims that went to the Portiuncula prompted the observation, "At the time and in the place of this distribution of Grace, the evangelic life and the distribution of pardon is living again."

The world, today more than ever, needs pardon just as it needs authentic conversion and reconciliation. So, we, as Secular Franciscans, must rediscover the meaning of the Pardon of Assisi in harmony with the spirit of conversion and with the fundamental attitudes that mark its progress.

It is asked of us then to set out courageously on the road of the Beatitudes as a means to cultivate an attitude toward an ideal of perfection, dedicating oneself in a constant effort to modify one's own behavior.

Finally, the development of an authentic change presupposes the attention given to the deeper attitudes and to the fundamental choices of life, which requires "courageous initiatives" and "definite choices" (Rule 15).

Faced with the spread of all types of violence - that has reached in these times levels of dramatic intensity - there has often lacked

on our part the example of alternative behavior oriented toward soliciting a radical turn-about.

We must be capable of dedicated action on unavoidable objectives:

- peace & justice
- disarmament
- protection of the environment
- primary rights to life, health, education, -- - work.

In the spirit of the Pardon of Assisi let us propose, then, to work right away in all the sections to give an evangelic content to those ideas and forces centered on the objective of a development of humanity that is compatible to the ecosystem, to peace and to social and economic justice.

NEW ROME OFFICE ADDRESS

Segreteria CIOFS
Via Pomponia Grecina, 31
00145 Roma, Italy
Phone & Fax: (06)512.39.64

COMPUTER VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Fr. Regis Armstrong, OFM Cap, has asked for volunteer assistance in typing articles for the *Greyfriars Review*. This journal, published four times a year, "contains translations of the finest articles of Franciscan interest originally published in European periodicals." (Quote from subscription form)

Volunteers would need access to WordPerfect for IBMs or a Macintosh based word processor. If interested, please contact:

Rev. Regis Armstrong, OFM Cap
The Friary
St. Bonaventure University
St. Bonaventure, NY 14778

Subscriptions, \$30 per year, can be ordered from: *Greyfriars Review*, P.O. Box F, St. Bonaventure, NY 14778

TELESCOPING THE NATIONAL CHAPTER

The Editor

In assembling the various articles for this edition of the *Newsletter*, it occurred to me that many of our readers might think of a National Chapter as an ordinary meeting, just slightly longer. Not quite.

Since 1982, I have attended our annual meetings and have witnessed many changes. Each year, the organizational aspect has improved, so that we now have back-to-back meetings, liturgies, and great fraternity. Who needs sleep!

Most of us arrive Wednesday afternoon. Following dinner, we have Evening Prayer combined with Mass. Then the first social begins which is not only a catch-up time for those of us who haven't met or talked for a year, but it is, more importantly, a time to welcome newcomers and observers. At some point, before morning, the Executive Council holds its third meeting of the year.

Thursday morning begins with Morning Prayer and breakfast. Then follows special meetings: Provincial Ministers, the Commissions, and Provincial Spiritual Assistants with the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants. Each group reports to the general meeting.

After lunch, there is the opening Mass and the formal opening of the Chapter. Reports of the various members of the Executive Council occupy the first session. Dinner, then Evening Prayer, and the second session. Finally, more fraternity - the social.

Friday continues where Thursday stopped. In the afternoon session, there are elections. Between that session and Evening Prayer

with installation of the newly elected, there is time for other meetings: each Friar obedience and any other group that wishes to meet.

Saturday is wrapup time until the closing Mass just before noon. In the afternoon, some take tours, some work, some chat. At some point, the Executive Council with its new members meets for the fourth and final time of the year.

At undefined times during those days before the elections, the Presider, the Witness, and Election Committee must meet.

For the Seculars, without regular community life, the liturgies are the high point. We often have Masses with a special theme that applies to our Franciscan lives. At Morning and Evening Prayer, Seculars are leader, reader, and antiphonarian. And, of course, there is singing!

This year, a special feature was added to the already beautiful chapel at Mt. St. Francis. Ken and Carole Amaral from Hawaii brought exquisite floral arrangements and a lei for the Blessed Mother.

For the past few years, where possible, the local province or fraternity has hosted the meeting. This year, the Province of Our Lady of Consolation and one of its local fraternities carried on the tradition superbly.

Mt. St. Francis Retreat House, which is on the grounds of Our Lady of Consolation headquarters, continued to be a home away from home as it has in the past. Our thanks to Brother Bob Roddy and his staff.

There you have a fast tour of seventy-two hours, hours that make us know we belong to a firmly established, worldwide Order.

THE LITTLE WHITE CHURCH

It wasn't the little white church in the Wildwood; in fact, it wasn't even white anymore. The congregation was small, but staunch; it gave generously of its money and time. The reason for the exterior deterioration was that the pastor was a first class tight wad, the proto-Scrooge.

Finally, the men of the parish approached him; they said that they would do the wire brushing, sanding, and painting, if only he would give them the money for the paint. He agreed to the work, but said he would buy the paint.

He bought a *whole* gallon and, secretly, thinned it with water.

The men spent all Saturday working and finished by late afternoon. The women had prepared a potluck supper which they had in the church basement. As it was free, the pastor attended.

Near the end of the meal, there was an horrendous electrical storm. As soon as possible, the pastor rushed outside to see if his secret had survived. The church was a streaked catastrophe.

Just then he heard a sonorous voice from the clouds, "Repaint, repaint. Thin no more!"

DIRECTIVE BOARD PLEASE NOTE

Our election procedures call for the Nominations Chairman to issue the invitations to nominate no later than February 1st. Until the CIOFS Presidency responds to the National petition (see "Future Elections", pp 1, 2) it will not be possible to determine whether the 1992 Chapter will elect one vice-minister or an entire slate. Therefore, the nomination process may have to begin late.

SERVANT OF THE SERVANTS

Dr. Marguerite B. Stein, SFO
Canonist

They have elected you. You have agreed to serve. What duties do you face as a member of your fraternity Council?

Francis spoke of them in the Prologue to our Rule:

We are spouses, when by the Holy Spirit, the faithful soul is united with our Lord Jesus Christ; we are brothers to him when we fulfill "the will of the Father who is in heaven." (Mt 12:50)

We are mothers, when we carry him in our heart and body (cf. 1 Cor 6:20) through divine love and a pure and sincere conscience; we give birth to him through a holy life which must give light to others by example. (cf. Mt 5:16).

And further down in that letter, Francis quotes from Jesus' prayer to the Father in John 17: 6-24:

"I do not pray for them alone; I pray also for those who will believe in Me through their word, that they may be holy by being one as we are."

The Rule itself, in ¶21, says:

The Council member's service is marked by a ready and willing spirit and is a duty of responsibility to each member and to the community."

Also our new General Constitutions, promulgated in 1990, set forth a specific list of duties in Article 50:

- a. to decide on the acceptance and admission to Profession of new brothers and sisters.
- b. to establish a fraternal dialogue with members in particular difficulties and to adopt consequent measures.
- c. to receive the request for withdrawal

and to decide on the suspension of a member from the Fraternity.

d. to decide on the establishment of sections or groups in conformity with the Constitutions and the Statutes.

e. to decide on the destination of available funds and, in general, to deliberate on matters concerning the financial conduct and economic affairs of the Fraternity.

f. to assign duties to the councilors and to the other professed members.

g. to request from the competent Superiors of the First Order and the TOR suitable and prepared religious as assistants.

h. to perform such other duties as are required by these Constitutions or which are necessary to carry out its proper purpose.

That is a loooong list. How can it be boiled down?

1. **SHOW UP.** Once elected you owe the members your attention to the business of their fraternity. They wanted you in office, because they thought you had horse sense and could cope with day-to-day crises in their behalf. If you don't go to meetings, you never find out what matters need attention; you have no opportunity to offer your suggestions, and some trouble maker may get the fraternity in some sort of difficulty that could have been avoided with your input.

2. When you attend the meeting, don't just sit there and decorate a chair, or look respectfully at the other council members. Again, you were elected to use your working brain on matter of fraternity business. **Don't just be a spectator; get in the game!**

3. From one council meeting to the next, be available by telephone - to other council members, to fraternity members. Give advice, ask questions, follow up on work you (and others) have agreed to do.

4. Take a role in formation with your frater-

nity: get to know the candidates, dialogue with them a bit, find out what their lives involve. All too soon, you will have to pass on their acceptability to be professed and you owe it to your brothers and sisters to be sure that candidates meet the requirements.

THE COUNCIL SETS AN EXAMPLE:

PRAYER LIFE. Talk about how you fulfill your duty to say the Office. Make sure that at the monthly meeting there is communal prayer in some form. Promote retreats or days of recollection at least once a year.

COMMUNITY LIFE. Promote parties, coffee gab sessions, celebrations of Francis' feast day, Greccio day (with crib), Alverno (Sigmata Feast Day). Babysit for each other. Go together to work at soup kitchens. Develop a spirit of oneness in the fraternity by doing things together.

RENDER ASSISTANCE. To each other and to others also. Lend money to people in a bind; visit the sick; bring onion or chicken soup; tender sympathy to those in crisis.

As Franciscans, we join together -
Prayer, Share, and Care.

QUINQUENNIAL CONGRESS

Catherine Miltz, SFO, Chairman

The Congress will be held at the University of Dayton, Dayton, Ohio, August 2-7, 1992. The costs are as follows:

Registration \$100 Married couple \$150

Double room, per person \$ 90 Single \$180

Meals \$ 98

The above information, the schedule, including speakers, workshops, and tours, and a registration form will be sent to all local fraternities shortly.

OUR FAMILY TODAY

Gloria N. Shriver, SFO
Chair, Family Commission

Vatican II brought about a change in emphasis. Referencés to parental responsibility and family obligation were found in the 1917 Code of Canon Law. Now, we hear about them from the pulpit. Even the Holy Father recently told us that the family is the most important issue in the Church today.

Being the most important issue is not the same as being the most basic. We are living in a time in which decades of affluence have instilled false values; parental teaching and family togetherness have become less important than income.

I think the main service the family can offer its members is helping them to learn how to love...teaching them how to do what is best for someone else, wanting only good for others. In our materialistic world, it is difficult to teach generosity, self-sacrifice. Can a child be taught to share, when there is a television or telephone in every room?

Even parents have trouble differentiating between needs and wants. We have to ask, "Should a mother work to buy a teenager his own car, if her working leaves the other children alone at home?"

Are we taking time to communicate? Many families have given up the idea of having meals together. If we can no longer eat together, do we set aside enough time for the family truly to get to know and understand each other? Maybe the present economic crunch will help us to restore community to our family life. Hopefully, some will find time to reinstitute a family prayer-time which will grow into a discussion of family joys and problems so that each member will get to know and love the others.

We devote a lot of time trying to teach our children that our God is a God who loves us

in spite of our mistakes. This is a good way to help them to understand that parents are like that too. We are told that most people model their image of God after their parents. If we think it's important for our children to see God as a loving and forgiving God, we must demonstrate love in action. We can only teach forgiveness by forgiving. When the youngster sees how we forgive, it gives him the courage to try to forgive others.

Today, when so many families have only one parent, or *must* have two working parents, the grandparents who live nearby have a special opportunity to demonstrate sound values. Grandparents are ideal for teaching children how to reach out, not only outside of their own wants and needs, but also beyond the immediate family.

Is it really harder to build a strong, loving family today than it has always been? According to *The Christian Parent Alert*, a survey of teachers was done in 1940 and again in the 1980s in which the teachers were asked to list the seven leading discipline problems. The results were as follows:

1940	TODAY
1. talking	drug abuse
2. chewing gum	alcohol
3. making noise	pregnancy
4. running in the halls	suicide
5. getting out of line	rape
6. not using the waste basket	assault/burglary
7. wearing improper clothing	arson

DOMESTICIANS

Joseph J. Halka, SFO
Chair, Work Commission

At the turn of the century, employment "in service" to wealthy and middle class households as maids, cooks, laundresses, butlers, gardeners, chauffeurs, grooms, and general maintenance people was a common and an honorable one. In fact it was a point of pride to be considered part of wealthy and influential households of "people of quality".

World War I destroyed much of this semi-feudal society. Electrical and mechanical devices eased some of their domestic burdens.

World War II broadened the work force to include women in many areas hitherto unknown to or denied them. New needs arose with the majority of wives and mothers now employed outside the home. Nursemaids and nannies were institutionalized in day care centers. The plethora of household aids nevertheless still needed hands and minds to operate them. Women often found themselves insufficiently liberated when they returned from the public workplace to their private "sweat shops" at home. As it became more necessary and more acceptable, the men of the house were expected to lend a hand with the domestic chores and did.

Post war inflation and recessions eroded the standard of living for many women who were now forced to work outside the home. Some heads of families and single parents were required to maintain more than one job to make ends meet. Domestic help became not a luxury, but a common necessity in urban American households. The flight of industry to Asian and Latin American countries responded to these same pressures and created new ones on the labor force. Service jobs became the only readily available alternative for many poorly schooled workers in this country. Now the wheel had turned full circle.

In the thirteenth century one of our tertiaries, St. Zita of Lucca, embodied the ideals of domestic servants and became their patroness and model. Like many others of our brothers and sisters of those early years of the Franciscan movement, she was poorly educated, relatively unskilled, but industrious and devoted to her employers, who, despite her lack of learning, placed their entire household in her charge. Her motto was, "A servant girl is not pious, if she is not industrious; workshy piety is sham piety."

Then as now, poverty is no guarantor of virtue, nor is wealth a guarantor of vice. It is just as prejudicial and just as stereotypical to presume the one as it is the other. Servitude is not undignified, if the service is performed well and compensated fairly. Servants can be just as abusive of their position as householders can be of theirs. Justice begins at home on the domestic front. There is no substitute for self respect. The domestician who airs the family's dirty linen in public, reveals more of self than of the betrayed employer. Scandalous exposes by former royal domestics tarnishes the image of self. We delude ourselves to think that the work done excuses the doer.

PLACE

Justin Carisio, SFO
Chair, Ecology

Much has been written about the sense of the sacred that attaches to certain places. We know that in the life of St. Francis particular places, such as the Portiuncula, had special meaning to him. It is especially Franciscan to see humble, ordinary places as sacred - already an abode of the Spirit even before human actions designate them as such. Once the friars were in a remote area where there was no chapel; so, Francis took the bows of two trees and entwined them to make a living chapel. No place was removed from the love of God or unworthy to serve the needs of praise.

Likewise in our own lives, wherever we are can become a sacred place. We have heard the expression, "bloom where you are planted." This can be for us an ecological challenge in a literal sense (as it is for the plant) as well as good advice in a spiritual sense. For what is the experience of a plant? The seed falls where it will, germinates, and takes root. In the natural course of events, once that has occurred, no further mobility is possible. The plant grows there, adapting to the conditions of that place, itself becoming a part of the local ecology.

We can bloom where we are planted if we begin to make the space in which we find ourselves sacred. A much repeated environmentalist slogan is "think globally, act locally". It is more Franciscan to "think *locally*, act locally". A Franciscan ecological perspective begins in the small spaces of our lives: window box planters, backyards, city corners, garden plots. Many in our society fret over mega-problems like global warming, species extinction, and the like. But as the farmer-poet Wendell Berry has written, "Our understandable wish to preserve the planet must somehow be reduced to the scale of our competence - that is, to the wish to preserve all of its humble households and neighborhoods. Moreover, we cannot save what we do not love, and Berry reminds us that "love is never abstract. It does not adhere to the universe or the planet...but to the singular sparrows of the street, the lilies of the field, 'the least of my brethren.'"

The past summer a large spider built its web in a corner of our garage where the post of the overhead door meets the lintel. My sons thought it was frightening - and it was a *large* spider. We let the web stay in place, though. I pointed out to the boys that the web was perfectly positioned near an outside light that, aglow in the dark, would attract many insects, some of which would fly into the web. We marveled at the way the spider seemed to increase in size over the days, and how, when the winds of a thunder storm destroyed the web, an even larger one was built. We remarked at the perfection of the design.

Gradually, the spider seemed like part of the neighborhood, a presence, an individual. As natural to our yard as the sassafras or the dogwood or the bluejay or the crow. Our relationship with the spider became Franciscan one morning when my three-year-old asked, "What is the spider's name?"

Our house and yard are sacred, and the creatures that share it with us are kin. It is

a sacred place because love binds mother, father, and sons to each other and to those who fly and grow and creep around us. Our ecological apostolic action begins there in the hundreds of small decisions we make each day. This ordinary and unexceptional place has a life history and a remembrance. We will not poison or mistreat it or defile or pollute it. It is part of our witness that Christ lives in our hearts. It is our hymn of praise.

THE RIGHT PERSPECTIVE

Ronald Michieli, SFO
Chair, Peace & Justice

"The justice that exalts a nation is not the justice of a constitutional diet; it is the justice of the God of the Bible. The sin that makes a nation miserable is the sin denounced by Isaiah and the prophets, by Jesus, by the sovereign papacy. The sin, or concept of sin, arrived at by consensus, determined in the light of widespread habit, public policy, cultural mores or opinion polls at any moment may tranquilize a nation, undermine a nation, and, by definition, be acceptable to a nation. But it may still be the sin that makes a nation miserable." (John Cardinal Wright, Labor Day Mass, St. Paul Cathedral, Pittsburgh, 1969.)

Cardinal Wright certainly had the right perspective and prophetic vision to provide the anchor for this Peace and Justice news article.

Peace and Justice is a big mission and requires constant prayer and understanding of the Gospel to expose injustice and bring the Franciscan peace effort into focus. The starting place, of course, is in our own hearts, for, if the heart has not been prepared to serve this mission, nothing will be forthcoming. Thus, it becomes imperative to have been formed in conscience.

How do we begin and where are we going is a question we need to ask ourselves. First, a clear and concise reading of the mission statement with the full understanding that what we engage in should be a complete

manifestation of the Church's Doctrine of Social Teaching. We, as Franciscans, are in the "forefront individually and collectively promoting justice by the testimony of our human lives and our courageous initiative." (Rule #15.) This simply means that in every activity we must see justice in ourselves and motivate justice in others. These activities take place in every form that we are called to witness. Our forum is everywhere we are. We become visible and motivating in demonstrating the conviction of faith by our living the Gospel.

Second, we implement the four parts of the Commission program: 1. Education, 2. Advocacy, 3. Planning, and 4. Networking, with an eye to our particular apostolate.

I. EDUCATION: Sources such as:

- A. The American Catholic Bishops Pastoral Letters on War, Peace and The American Economy.
- B. Social Ideals of St. Francis by James Meyer, OFM.
- C. The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order with Catechism and Instruction (Franciscan Herald Press), special notes on Rule 15, 17, & 19.
- D. The Gospel of Peace And Justice, Catholic Social Teaching Since Pope John.
- E. Blessed Are the Peacemakers - Biblical Perspectives on Peace And Its Social Foundations, edited by Anthony J. Tambasco (Paulist Press).

Develop a model education program with flexibility. Set a specific period of time to instruct. Hand out reading assignments or extrapolate short articles for your bulletins and newsletters. The essence of an effective program is an informed and enlightened advocate.

II. ADVOCACY: Speak out or write about such issues as housing, care for the homeless, hunger, education, health care, sexual and physical abuse at all levels and both sexes, AIDS, abortion, T.V. morality (or lack of), social consciousness, political ethics, ethics in the workplace, fair wages, and all aspects of life where human dignity is debased. Define the issue where your talent is most effectively put to use.

III. PLANNING: Use organizational structures to plan and promote religious actions which further the Church's position on peace and justice. For example, the Archdiocese of Denver Youth Ministry and Peace and Justice Commission sponsored a youth rally and procession and picnic. Another example - whenever a major issue is aired on radio or television which "purports to represent a majority view", organize a campaign to have people call the media and voice opinions by simply stating, "I was not a part of your poll; therefore, I would like to express my views on this issue." This is an effective challenge to those who attempt to control the public's mind by unethical and scandalous means of distortion by a minority and selected sampling of the public's attitudes. A third example is to call attention to the issue of concern by symbolic means. Many of our brothers and sisters kept candles in their windows at night to draw attention to peace during the Persian Gulf War. Others participated in non-violent action through organized community prayer and by providing counsel to families whose members were called to duty.

IV. NETWORKING: Communicate! Write to other provinces; exchange ideas and educational materials, program ideas, and swap newsletters.

This becomes your program. Now, how do you implement it? Here are some tips:

- A. Set up workshops on key issues.
- B. Contact your diocese. Find out what it is doing on peace and justice issues.
- C. Conduct seminars on "How to do it" techniques for:
 - 1. Phone campaigns to alert members of your fraternity or province on issues.
 - 2. Organize letter writing campaigns to public officials at all levels of government and the U.N.

Finally, enlist the help of others in carrying out programs and projects. The question for this issue is - What are my talents and how do I use these talents to foster peace and justice in my fraternity, parish, and community as a Secular Franciscan? May the peace of Jesus Christ be with you.

REGIONALIZATION - A VIEW FROM INSIDE THE PROCESS.

Laurence Herbert, SFO
Newsletter Staff

Basically regionalization is a process of grouping local fraternities on a geographical and cultural basis rather than on the province of the Friar Spiritual Assistants. A region would take the place of the provincial level of fraternity, it is NOT an additional level of fraternity, cf. article 20, S.F.O. Rule.

The process of regionalization in the United States is a relatively unexplored aspect of fraternal life for the local fraternities, the regional fraternity, the provincial fraternities and the national fraternity. Yet it is an essential aspect that all of us as Secular Franciscans must go through. Regionalization has been mandated for us by our Rule (1978) and by our new constitutions.

Any process of change is a cause of stress, because of the unknown result of the change. This is a normal and healthy human reaction. However, in order to grow we must change because no living thing can remain static; it either grows or it withers. Our faith, our Franciscan commitment, are living parts of our everyday life. As Secular Franciscans we are called on to go from the Gospel to life and from our lives to the Gospel. That is change. That is growth! If we are not growing as Franciscans then we are withering. We would be similar to the unproductive branch that the vine master will prune off and cast away.

There are times when our growth is gradual and hardly perceptible which causes little stress precisely because of the moderate rate of change. Then there are times when we seem to be in the middle of constant pandemonium. No matter where we turn there is commotion, which causes a great deal of stress in our lives and we long for the quiet-

ness and serenity of past times when things seemed more orderly. We all have experienced both types of growth in our personal lives as well as in our spiritual lives and we have come through the experience changed in some way. This is what we have been experiencing in the process of regionalization. The process has not been easy for anyone because of the unknown that waits for us in the future. It makes no difference whether we support or oppose the process of regionalization, the experience of change is a fact in our lives. It is a paradox that the only constant we can expect in life is that change is constant.

A case could be argued that now is not the time for regionalization, that we should wait for more information on the process. That is a valid argument. I say that if our Order is to grow to meet the challenges of the next century, of the next millennium, that we have to have a solid, close knit and local fraternal foundation to work from. Regionalization is the foundation upon which we will have to work for the coming of God's Kingdom. That foundation cannot be built only by the a few fraternities, nor by the regional council, but requires the efforts of every Secular Franciscan in the region. Let us not wait for some time in the future for the National Fraternity to say, "You fraternities over there, you have to form a region." That would be stress!

As followers of St. Francis we cannot hide from the world or from the changes in our Order. Just as St. Francis took time apart to pray about changes that were taking place in his order in the 1220's we too should pray about the changes we are experiencing in the 1990's. However, do not remain away from the reality of the changes, but go out to meet them and deal with them. And in that process of struggle and growth we will be changed, changed for the better.

THE FIRST REGION - HAWAII

Having met the requirements for an emerging region, the local fraternities of Hawaii, which have been part of St. Joseph of Cupertino Province, requested approval to become a region. The request was unanimously approved by the National Directive Board on Friday morning, October 25.

The name of the first Region is 'Ohana O Ke Anuenu which means Family of the Rainbow. The Minister is Mrs. Jude Wokoun, SFO. Her delegate to the Chapter was the Regional Secretary, Mrs. Carole Amaral, SFO.

PROVINCIAL MINISTERS' MEETING

The meeting was chaired by Geraldine Rome, SFO; William Wicks, SFO, was secretary. Observers were invited to participate. The following recommendations were to be made to the full Directive Board meeting and/or Executive Council:

1. That revision of the National Statutes begin as quickly as possible.
2. That consideration be given to the 1990 recommendations which were:
 - a. That the title minister be used nationwide rather than president.
 - b. that the friar vote be limited to the four members of the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants.
 - c. that each CIOFS councilor attend and have a vote at Executive Council meetings.
3. That copies of the new Constitutions be available from the *Newsletter* as well as from provinces. It is understood that there would be a charge for copies from the *Newsletter*.
4. That there be a standardized document of

establishment for local fraternities.

5. That the opinion of the National Canonist would be sought in the matter of procedure when the document of establishment has been lost.
6. That contributions be paid to the National only for active, professed members.

PROVINCIAL SPIRITUAL ASSISTANTS' MEETING

Rev. Adalbert Wolski, TOR, presided; Rev. Stephen Sabbagh, OFM, was secretary. Twenty-four Spiritual Assistants and the General Assistant attended.

The major topic for discussion was should Friars participate in the election of officers of the SFO. The motion was made that they should not; twenty-two assented.

The General Assistant, Fr. Carl Schafer, OFM, strongly urged the establishment of an updated program of formation among the Friars for future Spiritual Assistants for the Secular Franciscan Order.

COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

First Vice-Minister Mary Mazotti, SFO, Council representative to the Commissions met with the Commissioners. Also present were Ronald Pihokker, SFO, Formation and Anneta Duveen, SFO, Franciscans at the U.N. (Peace and Justice).

Time was devoted to setting up a proper schedule for communications to the general membership.

The importance of the Apostolic Commissions and of Formation is shown by the importance given them in the new Rule and Constitutions.

INTERNATIONAL REPORT

Rev. Carl Schafer, OFM, reported on the general Constitutions. He said they had been translated by him and Rev. Kevin Schindler-McGraw, OFM Conv, who is also a member of the Conference of General Spiritual Assistants. The English translation was approved October 4, 1991.

The new document defines the categories of what has previously been called spiritual assistants. Many local fraternities have Franciscan Brothers or Sisters, and it is now permissible to have qualified SFO laity where necessary. However, only priests may be called assistants. All others must be called animators. Those local fraternities with animators must have a priest listed as assistant, although he may not be able to visit very often.

Father Carl also said that the *altius moderamen* applies to all levels of fraternity, because it applies to the appointment of an assistant and the carrying out of pastoral visitations.

THE GENERAL CONSTITUTIONS

Promulgated September 8, 1990, the English translation was delivered to the National Chapter by Rev. Carl Schafer, OFM, Conference of General Spiritual Assistants. It is considered experimental for six years from the date of promulgation.

Because of the probability that parts of it will be revised, the National Executive Council will not have it printed into a proper, bound volume at this time. However, Provincial Ministers and Provincial Spiritual Assistants were able to obtain a copy which can be duplicated.

Also, it will be available from the *Newsletter*. Again, because of possible changes, it will not be a stock item, and, because it will be available within each province, there will be a charge for copies from the *Newsletter*. The copies will be printed on one side of the paper and will be in a folder-type binding.

Orders for copies will be taken until January 31, 1992; shipment will be made during February. The cost, including postage, will be \$6.50 first class mail; \$5.00 book rate.

Checks should be made payable to NAFRA and sent to the *Newsletter*. If there is sufficient demand, there will be subsequent printings.

DIRECTORY OF LOCAL FRATERNITIES UPDATED

The National Directory of Local Fraternities has a two-fold purpose:

1. Referring members who are moving to a new fraternity.
2. Referring potential members to a local fraternity.

The update was given to each Provincial Minister and Spiritual Assistant. It is not available to local fraternities, but, if you are moving, contact your Minister or provincial office for a copy of fraternities in your new location. "Don't leave home without it." Our Rule and Constitutions no longer permit the old "isolated status".

When a member moves, he must transfer if there is a fraternity within reasonable distance; *reasonable* could be a variable. If transfer is impossible, there must be regular contact between the previous fraternity and the member (each with the other).

