



Let's All Attend the Quinquennial Congress

Where are you planning to be this coming July? In particular, where are you planning to be July 15-20? Why not join with us--600 to 1000 of your S.F.O. brothers and sisters--at the University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware, to attend the National Fraternity Quinquennial Congress?

Why should you attend the Quinquennial Congress? For the normal, typical and obvious reasons: the joy of reunion with good friends, the opportunity to make new friends, the opportunity to share your faith journey with others, for uplifting liturgies, inspiring speakers, great music (Marty Haugen), tours of local attractions, good food, comfortable accommodations.

Why should you attend the Quinquennial Congress? For reasons that go above and beyond the obvious! This Congress is perhaps the most important Congress the National Fraternity of the S.F.O.-USA has ever held. The whole thrust and intent of the Congress is to set the foundation for the spiritual revival/renewal of the S.F.O. in the U.S.A. as we enter the next century/millennium.

Why should you attend the Quinquennial Congress? Because we live in a critical period in human history. Actually, we are at a crisis point. As the third millennium approaches, we find that our contemporary society is not very much different from the social order of St. Francis' day. Both then and now greed and grinding poverty abound. Violence and despair cripple the hearts of our people. AIDS victims are our 20th (21st) Century lepers. Yet, we can still choose wholeness and holiness. Come to the Congress and learn (or teach) how to make the right choices.

Why should you attend the Quinquennial Congress? Because the S.F.O., the Church and the world need our collective vision and direction, our wisdom and understanding. We need to function as who we are, the Body of Christ, and to speak the truth and allow the Holy Spirit to transform us and the world. As God's prophets and lovers, God's voice and God's heart, we must "return to the excitement of our founding story[ies], [those of the early Christian and Franciscan communities] so as to be re-energized to address the issues of contemporary society at their very roots." How do we accomplish this and what is the cost? Nothing less than "...to willingly enter into the Pascal Mystery (death) so that new life can emerge. It is...about entering into the mystery of God's plan." Come to the Congress and share your gifts with those who need them.

Why should you attend the Quinquennial Congress? Because St. Francis exhorts us to remember:

That we have been called as FRATERNITY "...to go and rebuild [God's] house which is falling into ruins."

That, as followers of St. Francis, we are sent forth "...to preach the message, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand!'" Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils. Freely you have received, freely give.

That "...the Lord gave [us] some brothers" and sisters to accompany us on the journey and that it is God who desires our coming together on the Feast of St. Bonaventure (July 15). St. Francis challenges us individually and collectively to do all we can to meet the needs of these critical times, and it is only by coming together as brothers and sisters that we will ever have the courage to persevere.

That we must "...begin again for up to now we have done nothing."

Finally, why should you attend the Quinquennial Congress? At the Quinquennial Congress, you will have the unprecedented opportunity to experience deep and life-changing spiritual growth. But, because "no man [or woman] is an island," we cannot grow in love and maturity by ourselves. We Secular Franciscans grow best through life in fraternity.

Teilhard de Chardin said, "The future of the earth is in our hands. How shall we decide? It is not our heads or our bodies which we must bring together, but our hearts." So let us join our hearts at the University of Delaware, July 15-20, 1997. Let us pray that the Spirit of God will move through our assembly, for the time is now, the Kingdom of God is at hand. Please join us.

Pax et bonum,

Richard Morton, S.F.O., National Minister, and the Quinquennial Congress Planning Committee

THE NATIONAL FRATERNITY OF THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER--USA FAMILY COMMISSION

Carol Gentile, S.F.O., Chairperson, Family Commission, 136 Woods Ave. Monaca, PA 15061 (412) 775-4248

"There are different gifts but the same spirit, there are different ministries but the same Lord, there are different works but the same God who accomplishes all of them in everyone. To each person the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good." (1 Cor. 12:4-7)

M The mission of the Family Commission of the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States of America is to witness that the family is a sanctuary of acceptance, support and respect which encourages the total growth of its individual members and nurtures them in the spirit of peace and love, enabling them to be aware that they are children of God and enabling them to let this peace and love flow out to others.

A The Family Commission encourages the sisters and brothers to unite in prayer for the restoration of the family, to respect and value all life, to foster human interaction and human development and to extend this mission to their own natural families, to the Franciscan Family, to the Church family, the community family and the world family.

T Goal 1: To encourage the sisters and brothers, single and married, to cultivate a spirit of prayer, peace, fidelity and respect for life at every stage of human development within their own families, fraternities and in the community at large.

E Goal 2: To help the brothers and sisters who are married to live the grace of matrimony in such a manner that they witness to the world that marriage is a sacramental commitment and a holy union blessed by God.

R Goal 3: To challenge those sisters and brothers who are parents to be especially attentive to the Christian education and vocation of each child while recognizing them as unique sons and daughters of God.

I Goal 4: To ensure that all Secular Franciscans understand that because Christ showed special love for children, they must respond to the needs of children not only within their own families, but also in their churches, communities and in the world.

A Goal 5: To challenge each fraternity to strive to become for its members a real family in every sense of the word.

L Goal 6: To encourage each fraternity to minister to the lonely, the sick and the discouraged among its own members and to reach out into the world to help poor and hurting families.

Goal 7: To provide input to the National Executive Council and Directive Boards on ways to address these issues.

Connecting Heaven and Earth

We, as Secular Franciscans are called to address these needs. Here are examples being practiced:

- Feeding the hungry by working in soup kitchens, assisting with Meals on Wheels, donating to food banks, serving lunch to street kids and giving food to poor families;
- Clothing the naked by giving clothes to poor families and knitting or quilting items to give to needy people;
- Sheltering the homeless by assisting homeless people, helping jailed women make the transition to community life;
- Comforting the sick and elderly by volunteering at a nursing home, visiting people in prisons, taking care of elderly parents, aiding the elderly and supporting Fraternity Brothers and Sisters who are hurting mentally or physically;
- Building strong families by helping unwed mothers, babysitting grandchildren to give parents a breather, babysitting small children for a family in need, hosting picnics for families of Fraternity members, distributing prayer cards against abortion, aiding the Right to Life movement, writing articles on the Family for regional newsletters, helping other Fraternity members, raising funds to cover Fraternity costs when members cannot afford it, and making cassette tapes of Franciscan meetings to take to elderly members.

O God, you are the giver of all life. You are the breath of life; you are why we exist. We ask your blessing today on the men and women who are so dedicated to your children. We know, God, that nothing begins without your help. Nothing can continue without your grace. May this day and days to come be always and forever glorified with your presence. We ask you, God, to walk with us and talk with us so that your work of love can continue through our minds, our bodies and our spirits which you have made. Help us, God, to love others as you love us. Help us on our journey of life to be whole and holy. We thank you, God, for the privilege to serve you for you, my God, are the meaning of all life. Amen.

Activities

1. Discuss your Family Commission and its activities.
2. Pick one of the above ideas and discuss it.
3. In what way do we contribute to the goals of our immediate family?

Work As A Gift Given

Ed Zablocki, S.F.O., Co-chair, Work Commission

Let them esteem work as a gift, and as a sharing in the creation, redemption, and service of the human community. (Art. 16)

In his Rule of 1223, St. Francis speaks of those friars “to whom God has given the grace of working.” Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines grace as “unmerited divine assistance given man for his regeneration or sanctification.” Our Constitutions reaffirm that: “For St. Francis, work is a gift and to work is a grace.” (Art. 23)

We have been given many gifts. We all have received both natural gifts (talents) and supernatural gifts (charisms). All these gifts require our effort for the to be expressed, in other words, it takes work. We utilize these gifts through work for the benefit of ourselves, our families, our Church, and our world. Even our spiritual gifts (charisms) help us to do the Church’s work in the world.

The truth is , very few of us have “church” charisms (gifts for teaching CCD, helping with RCIA, or singing in the choir). Most charisms are intended to be used in the marketplace rather than in the Church. The Church’s mission is to evangelize the *world*, to renew the *world*, and that is where most of us are called to use our gifts. Charism of administration is needed in the secular world to bring gospel values into government and business. Gifts of compassion hospitality and service are needed in our neighborhoods just as much as in our parishes. (Ron Ryan, “The Power Is On,” New Covenant, July, 1993).

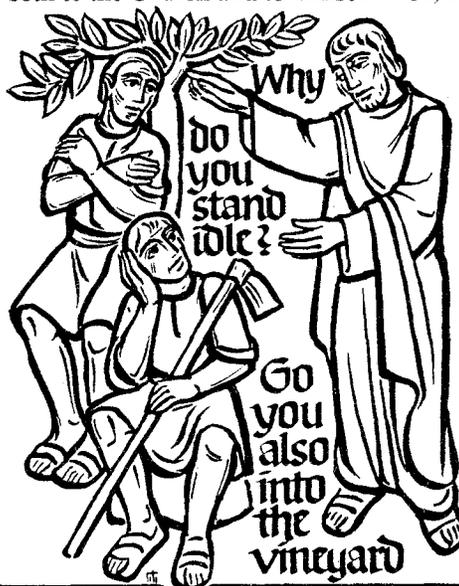
Our work is the means God has given us that allows us to exercise, develop and use our gifts. How tragic it would be if these gifts were not used! This puts the act of “working” in a different perspective. From this perspective, Sr. Joan Chittester, O.S.B., explains that “Work is not a nuisance to be avoided. Work is a gift to be given.”

Work is my gift to the world, It is my social fruitfulness. It ties me to my neighbor and binds me to the future. It lights up that spark in me that is most like the God of Genesis. I tidy the garden and plant the garden and and distribute the good of the garden and know that it is good.
(Chittester, “Work: Participation in Creation,” Weavings)

The Church does not mince words about the importance of our giving the gift of ourselves through our work to create, sustain and renew the Church and the world. *The Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity* says that “A member who does not work at the growth of the body to the full extent of his gifts must be considered useless both to the Church and to himself.” So, be useful, give your gifts, enrich the world—do good work(s)!

Dialogue Starters

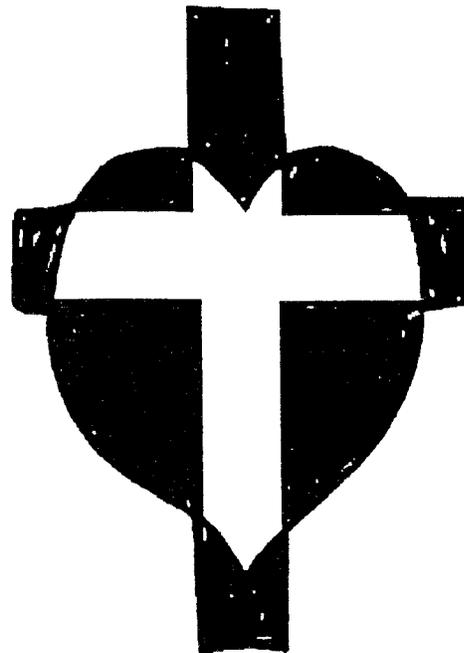
1. What is the greatest gift that you give to the Church and the world through your work?
2. How would you like to be able to give more of the gift of yourself through work?



Kingdom Building

Jim McIntosh, S.F.O., Chair, Peace & Justice Commission

"When you spread out your hands, I close my eyes to you; though you pray the more, I will not listen. Your hands are full of blood! Wash yourselves clean! Put away your misdeeds from before my eyes; cease doing evil; learn to do good. Make justice your aim: redress the wronged, hear the orphan's plea, defend the widow." (Isaiah 1:15-16)



Doing Peace and Justice is simply helping to bring about the Kingdom of God preached by Jesus Christ. The Kingdom is that "which is and which is to come."¹ The Kingdom was proclaimed by Christ and founded by his death and resurrection. We believe it will only become fully present at the end times, but we can help that Kingdom break into our time and place by doing the work of peace and justice.

The peace we seek to build is much more than the absence of hostilities. To be sure, it is a world without violence and a world freed from "the age-old slavery of war."² But it is also a world where all live together in mutual cooperation, supporting those who are in need. It is a world where there are no feelings of hostility, contempt and distrust; no racial hatred or unbending ideologies; where people are not placed in opposing camps.³ Most fundamentally, this "peace is built on the foundation of justice."⁴

The justice which is required for the peace of Christ is simply upholding the dignity of all, giving to each their due and not withholding that which belongs to another. This sounds simple and forthright, but has important implications for those of us in the first world.

The Catholic Church teaches that God created the world for the use of all humankind. The Church recognizes the need for private property, but only so far as that which is excess is not required by others for their "essential needs" (food, shelter, clothing, and so forth).⁵ The new catechism goes so far as to quote St. John Chrysostom in saying: "Not to enable the poor to share in our goods is to steal from them and deprive them of life. The goods we possess are not ours, but theirs." And: "The demands of justice must be satisfied first of all; that which is already due in justice is not to be offered as a gift of charity." It also quotes St. Gregory the Great: "When we attend to the needs of those in want, we give them what is theirs, not ours. More than performing works of mercy, we are paying a debt of justice."⁶

This is the justice demanded by God in the Scriptures, preached by Jesus in the Gospels and taught today in a most urgent way by our Church. It is true on both a personal level in how we deal with the poor and needy with whom we come in contact, and also on a global level as we, as country, deal with poor and desperate nations around the world. This can be accomplished in a number of ways. First, direct aid when needed — remembering that we are simply giving what is already owned by those who need it. Secondly, "helping entire peoples which are presently excluded or marginalized to enter into the sphere of economic and human development."⁷ Finally, reforming "international economic and financial institutions so that they will better promote equitable relationships with less advanced countries. The efforts of poor countries working for growth and liberation must be supported."⁸

¹ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Paul VI, 1975, No. 59.3.

² *Gaudium et Spes*, Documents of Vatican II, 1963, 81.3.

³ Cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, Documents of Vatican II, 1963, 82.2.

⁴ *Centesimus Annus*, John Paul II, 1991, No. 5.2b.

⁵ Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1994, Nos. 2401-2048.

⁶ Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1994, No. 2446.

⁷ *Centesimus Annus*, John Paul II, 1991, No. 58a.

⁸ Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1994, No. 2440.

Discussion Questions

1. Where in my neighborhood can I see the Kingdom of God making itself known? What concrete steps can I take to help it become more present?
2. Where in the world do I see opportunities for Kingdom building. What can I do today to help make this a more just world?

National Ecology Commission Secular Franciscan Order, U.S.A.

Charles Spencer, S.F.O., Chairperson 107 Jensen Circle, West Springfield, MA 01089-4451
Tel/Fax (413) 737-7600/e-mail: cspencer@mail.map.com

PURPOSE

The National Ecology Commission, along with a network of Regional Ecology Commissioners, local fraternity representatives and others, calls attention to God's glory in creation in accordance with Scripture, Church teachings, the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order, and the Ecology Commission Mission Statement. The Commission is, in essence, a life commission, accepting *all* forms of creation, animate and inanimate, as the handiwork of the Lord. The Commission stresses the importance of acknowledging that God's plan goes far beyond human comprehension, value and judgement. It is to recognize that the large and splendid are no greater than the small and disfigured. The Commission seeks to ultimately create an ecology of mind.

The Commission not only points to creation's unfathomable depth, but its relativity to divine providence in everyday life. The Commission seeks to instill that by experiencing God's presence in creation we are better able to cultivate humility, poverty, purity, hope, faith and trust in our own lives. This is reflected, in part, by decisions we make, in the marketplace or otherwise, and by recognizing that God's presence is not only reflective in nature, but in everything that comes and goes by way of our hands, always asking, "What life was given up for this?" It is to be reminded that consumption without "thanks" stems from ignorance, and that by coming to know creation, we become more responsive to her defense. It is also to understand that as one's care for creation grows, love itself grows.

The Commission also researches and distributes scientific data relative to environmental problems and solutions, and the potential impacts on public health.

The Commission pursues its mission through meetings, conferences, public speaking, formation articles, personal correspondence, The Guardian of Creation, newsletter, plus the Commission's World Web Site at <http://pages.map.com/SecularFranciscanEcology>, featuring its Mission Statement, formation articles, speeches, guidelines, references to St. Francis, Scripture, Catechismal references, contributing articles, position papers, legislative updates, additional contacts, resources, etc. The Ecology Commission also pursues its mission through the media, direct action, public programs, and by collaborating with religious and secular organizations which also address ecological, environmental and public health related issues. Three major projects of the Commission include the annual National Wildflower Restoration Initiative, now in its fourth year; National Wildflower Week, celebrated during the first full week of May; and the 2nd National Ecology Apostolate Leadership Training Conference, June 20-26, 1998, at "Graymoor," Garrison, New York.

Questions for discussion:

1. What experience have you found valuable to your growing closer to creation?
2. What do you and/or your family do to express care for creation?
3. What can the Ecology Commission do to help create a greater love for creation, and what can you suggest to help the Ecology Commission accomplish its mission?



EARTH'S CRAMMED WITH HEAVEN
AND EVERY COMMON BUSH
AFIRE WITH GOD
AND ONLY HE WHO SEES
TAKES OFF HIS SHOES
THE REST SIT ROUND IT
AND PLUCK BLACKBERRIES.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

NATIONAL FRATERNITY – SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER – U.S.A.

QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT FOR CALENDAR YEAR 1996

+
+ + +
+

Account Number	Quarter Ended:	03/31/96	06/30/96	09/30/96	12/31/96	TOTAL YEAR	BUDGET
--- INCOME ---							
6110	PER CAPITA	10,699	8,908	28,494	16,540	64,641	72,000
6120	INTEREST	202	204	168	183	756	500
6200&6206	FORMATION SALES	3,664	4,784	4,688	3,937	17,073	15,000
6210	NEWSLET SUBSCRIPTIONS	1,331	1,069	1,102	1,157	4,659	3,000
6140	MISCELLANEOUS	248		682	1,271	2,201	1,500
	TOTAL INCOME	16,144	14,965	35,134	23,088	89,330	92,000
--- EXPENSES ---							
7145	CIOFS MEETING		7,500	578		8,078	6,000
7110	CIOFS PER CAPITA		3,872			3,872	3,600
7120	NEWSLETTER	1,778	1,004	1,220	238	4,239	7,000
7130	ANNUAL MEETING		1,067	6,461	13,931	21,459	20,000
7140	COUNCIL OFFICERS	3,010	1,369	3,990	4,202	12,571	10,000
7150	COUNCIL MEETINGS	(368)	1,751	4,551		5,934	15,000
7135	QUINQUENNIAL		600	3,004	847	4,451	
COMMISSIONS:							
7181	FORMATION	1,768	48			1,815	5,000
7180	FORMATION-PRINTING	4,177	262	480	6,511	11,430	12,000
7182	PEACE & JUSTICE				221	221	1,750
7183	FAMILY	827	767	157	359	2,109	1,750
7184	WORK	89	747	914		1,750	1,750
7185	ECOLOGY		707	792	378	1,876	1,750
7186	REGIONALIZATION						1,000
MISCELLANEOUS:							
7191	LIVING BY FAITH (LUYH)	520	689	434	680	2,324	900
7189	NEWSLETTER EDITORS CONFERENCE						1,000
7195	EVANGELIZATION 2000						500
7199	CONFERENCE NAT SP ASST				1,000	1,000	1,000
7200	CNSA LOAN-PUBLICATION	3,000				3,000	3,000
7197	OTHER	100				100	1,000
RESTRICTED FUNDS:							
7300-7305	SACRED HEART FUND			5,396	693	6,089	
7306	YOUTH COMMISSION	(345)	182	189	(229)	(203)	
7307	ANONYMOUS DONOR FUND	(5,000)	2,043	135	(8,100)	(10,922)	
	TOTAL EXPENSES	9,556	22,606	28,302	20,730	81,193	94,000
	NET INCOME (EXPENSE)	6,588	(7,641)	6,832	2,358	8,137	(2,000)
BEG: CHECKING-MARINE							
	SAVINGS-MARINE	17,718	24,110	16,270	22,901		
	RESTRICTED FUNDS	16,223	11,073	13,497	19,419		
	TOTAL	9,835	15,180	12,955	7,234		
	TOTAL	43,775	50,364	42,722	49,554		
END: CHECKING-MARINE							
	SAVINGS-MARINE	24,110	16,270	22,901	25,060		
	RESTRICTED FUNDS	11,073	13,497	19,419	11,982		
	TOTAL	15,180	12,955	7,234	14,871		
	TOTAL	50,364	42,722	49,554	51,912		

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED

John K. Sanborn, sfo
National Treasurer

06-Jan-97

NATIONAL FRATERNITY – SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER – U.S.A.

BUDGET FOR 1997

AS APPROVED BY THE NATIONAL FRATERNITY COUNCIL ON 10/16/96.

----- INCOME -----		ACCOUNT NUMBER
PER CAPITA @ \$4 (19,000 members)	76,000	6110
INTEREST	700	6120
FORMATION BOOK SALES	15,000	6200+6206
NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTIONS	4,000	6210
MISCELLANEOUS	1,300	6140
<hr/>		
TOTAL INCOME	97,000	
<hr/>		
----- EXPENSES -----		
CIOFS PER CAPITA	4,000	7110
NEWSLETTER	8,000	7120
ANNUAL MEETING	20,000	7130
COUNCIL OFFICERS	15,000	7140
COUNCIL MEETINGS	15,000	7150
VISITATION (at Election)	3,000	7160
FORMATION – PRINTING	14,000	7180
COMMISSIONS:		
FORMATION	6,000	7181
PEACE & JUSTICE	3,000	7182
FAMILY	3,000	7183
WORK	3,000	7184
ECOLOGY	3,000	7185
YOUTH	2,000	7187
MISCELLANEOUS:		
LIVING BY FAITH	2,000	7191
EVANGELIZATION 2000	500	7195
CONFERENCE NATIONAL SP ASST	1,000	7199
OTHER	1,500	7197
<hr/>		
TOTAL EXPENSES	104,000	
<hr/>		
NET DEFICIT	(7,000)	

John K Sanborn, sfo
National Treasurer

23–Oct–96

01/06/97

REGION SUMMARY REPORT

#	REGION NAME	YEAR	FRATS	EM	# PROF	# CAND	# INQU	BAL DUE
01	ASSUMPTION PROVINCE	1996	3	0	145	0	0	0
02	IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PRO	1996	33	0	709	86	46	0
03	ST JOHN THE BAPTIST PROVI	1996	6	0	125	7	0	0
04	HOLY NAME OF JESUS PROVIN	1996	33	2	914	67	53	0
05	SACRED HEART PROVINCE	1996	3	0	28	0	0	0
11	HOLY STIGMATA PROVINCE	1995	14	0	303	14	16	1212 e
13	ST MARY PROVINCE	1996	45	2	1360	39	0	0
17	MOST SACRED HEART OF JESU	1995	0	1	11	0	0	176 e
23	ST ANTHONY OF PADUA PROVI	1996	10	0	177	0	0	0
25	ST CASIMIR PROVINCE	1996	4	0	53	8	0	0
50	OHANA O KE ANUENUE	1996	4	1	40	4	4	0
51	FIVE FRANCISCAN MARTYRS	1995	29	8	585	71	30	2340 e
52	ST FRANCIS	1996	26	3	1100	120	117	0
53	BL JUNIPERO SERRA	1996	30	2	744	62	39	0
54	TROUBADOURS OF PEACE	1996	14	0	360	54	27	0
55	QUEEN OF PEACE	1996	31	2	631	32	45	1192
56	DIVINE MERCY	1996	26	1	1038	50	37	0
57	MARGARET OF CORTONA	1996	29	4	785	55	54	0
58	ST. THOMAS MORE	1996	9	0	292	26	10	0
59	MOTHER CABRINI	1996	31	2	850	0	0	0
60	ST JOAN OF ARC	1996	17	3	339	49	33	0
61	BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF S	1996	17	0	202	14	16	0
62	EXALTATION OF HOLY CROSS	1996	3	0	98	7	4	0
63	FRANCISCANS OF PRAIRIE	1996	9	0	344	0	0	0
64	HOLY TRINITY	1996	21	1	421	45	16	0
65	LA VERNA	estab 10/95	0	0	0	0	0	0
66	OUR LADY OF INDIANA	1996	20	0	416	27	0	0
67	LOS TRES COMPANEROS	1996	22	6	330	0	0	0
68	LADY POVERTY	1996	32	2	712	67	70	0
69	BL. KATHARINE DREXEL	1996	43	0	1021	0	0	0
70	ST MAXIMILIAN KOLBE	1996	23	3	584	33	5	814
71	BL KATERI TEKAKWITHA	1996	40	4	760	88	37	0
72	SANTA MARIA DE LAS MONTAN	1996	19	0	206	0	0	0
73	OUR LADY OF THE ROCKIES	1996	7	2	108	14	2	0
74	ST CLARE	1996	13	1	369	24	7	738
75	OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE	estab 10/95	0	0	0	0	0	0
76	FR SOLANUS CASEY	estab 10/96	0	0	0	0	0	0
77	OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS	1996	56	0	937	82	84	0
78	ST ELIZ. OF HUNGARY	estab 10/96	0	0	0	0	0	0
79	THE TAU CROSS (EM)		0	0	0	0	0	0
80	JUAN DE PADILLIA	estab 10/96	0	0	0	0	0	0

*** Total ***

722 50 17097 1145 752

*** Total Balance Due ***
(e = estimated: 1995 x \$4)

6472



RECYCLED PAPER

SOYA INK

Work Commission of the Secular Franciscan Order, U.S.A.

*Ed and Mary Zablocki, S.F.O., Co-Chairs, Work Commission
360 Beard Ave., Buffalo, NY 14214 (716) 838-4178
e-mail: zablocki@destrier.acsu.buffalo.edu*

I recently read a comic in the paper that featured a man looking for a job. He says to the other character in the comic that he wants to serve the "greatest king the world has ever know." The other guy looks at him for a minute and tells him to go to the monastery one block away.

My first inclination was to chuckle with satisfaction that someone in the media appreciates the truth about the world's greatest King, but after a moment's reflection, I thought, "Wait a minute!" Are we not working hard to dispel the notion that service of the Great King is found only in a monastery? Should the man in the comic not have simply handed the job hunter his tools and said, "Okay, start now"?

It's interesting to me that we have such a notion about monasteries. We have created this split between the work of God's kingdom (i.e. the sweat of the brow, the nitty gritty, tedious, high risk or just plain exhausting) and the work of the world. But what do we think goes on in monasteries? Monks do not just sit and pray. They do any and all of work that gets done! In the fields, the kitchen, the sickroom, the chapel, the machine shop--whatever needs to be done, they do it. The nuns who share life in the cloister are the same. By necessity, monasteries are microcosms of the world outside their walls. If the fellow in the comic showed up at the monastery door, I imagine the doorkeeper might hand him a broom to sweep the foyer!

Monastery life has sort of gotten a bad rap in the Church lately. Lay people are finally beginning to really emerge as valuable members of the "team." We hold this new awareness very dear. It is easy for us to say, "No more monastery mentality," There is great need for us to claim our identity as men and women of the world. We are also called to appreciate the relationship between ourselves and members of the clergy and vowed religious life.

For the last three decades we have struggled with our changing identity, nowhere more confusing than in the area of work. Prior to Vatican II we functioned sort of as worker bees outside the inner sanctum, buzzing about doing our duty, entering the sacred dwelling only for purposes of being blessed by those whose place it was to dispense blessings. Then, after the communion rails were down and altars turned around and service to the Church within the physical structure of the Church was open to us, we turned our focus toward the clergy again. This time we looked for guidance in our new right to be in the sanctuary, the sacristy (a big change for women) and the rectory.

Now as we approach the third millennium, we must get down to business. Labor and management, government and public works, health care and our legal system--all are in chaos. We as a nation are in crisis as unemployment rots out the underpinnings of our economy, as greed and power surface as gods no less than and probably more than at any other point in our history.

The monks and nuns, maintaining their own lives, subsisting on the fruits of their own labors are in no position to aid us materially. While being more than ever the place where we need to gather to gain spiritual nourishment, the Church cannot and should not be the place we find our role as vineyard workers. Our vineyard is the world!

The National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States designated the Apostolic Commissions to address areas in which our Rule calls us as Franciscans. The Work Commission was established to help you focus on your work as the place where you live out your vocation as a Franciscan. Some things we have done to help you include writing a manual due out in the next year. We have developed a presentation we believe is informative and sometimes surprising about the many and myriad ways our work fulfills our vocation to live the Gospel and build the kingdom of God. We have published a newsletter now featured in TAU-USA.

And you? What are you supposed to do with us? What we need from you is to read what we have to say, to communicate with us concerns you see about your own work that you want to act on, take heart from our encouragement and offer us any encouraging articles or stories you wish to share about your work. We are here to help you find ways to better your work life. We also need you to join the ranks of NAFRA as local leaders on the commission in your regions and in local fraternities. Four of us serve on the National Work Commission with the intention of coordinating and communicating to the entire Secular Franciscan Order in the U.S.A. the wonderful things we discover about work. We believe we can be frank about the great need we have for help on the grass roots level. Educate yourselves. We are glad to help you. You might as well avail yourselves of what we have to share. You deserve to be spiritually enriched by your labor; after all, it is you who is doing the work.



Family Matters

National Family Commission, Carol Gentile, S.F.O., Chairwoman
126 Woods Ave. Monaca, PA 15061(412) 775-4248

"Never again shall they know hunger or thirst, nor shall the sun or its heat beat down on them, for the lamb on the throne will shepherd them. He will lead them to springs of life giving water, and God will wipe every tear from their eyes." (Revelation 7:16-17)

World Food Summit

The World Food Summit, November 13-17, 1996, brought together heads of state and government and other world leaders at the Rome headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The objective of the Summit is to renew high-level commitment around the world to the eradication of hunger and malnutrition, and for the achievement of lasting food security for all people. In developing countries alone, more than 800 million people face chronic under nutrition, and 200 million children under the age of five suffer from chronic calorie and protein deficiencies.

Franciscans International Team—Participants at the World Food Summit and NGO Forum

The Franciscans International team included: Carol Gentile, S.F.O. (USA); Calvin Bugho, O.F.M. (Brazil); Rose Fernando, F.M.M. (Sri Lanka). The non-governmental forum took place at the Ostiense Air Terminal. Representatives of more than 1200 organizations from eighty some countries came from all regions of the world. After a week of intense meetings, workshops, through regional and global consultations, solidarity was discovered and affirmed.

Prior to the final statement many suggestions were made on the draft statement by the delegates. The Family Commission Chair (USA), spoke of the need for the inclusion of the ethical aspects involved in food production and consumption. She insisted on Franciscan themes of concern for the poor, peace and non-violence and care for creation.

Franciscans Involvement in All Religious Caucus to the WFS

For all practical purposes it was a statement presented by the Franciscan group with the values of ethics, commitment to the poor, involvement in the socio-political aspects, with special reference to trade policies. The drafting committee consisted of five members, including Rose Fernando, F.F.M. (Sri Lanka), and the Family Commission Chair (USA). The Family Commission Chair (USA) also attended a workshop dealing with population growth and food security. Carol spoke on the ethics of population control, stating that the basic problem to be tackled with regard to this is greed. She was interviewed by the Arlington Catholic Herald from Global news on abortion, birth control and population issues.

World Leaders Conclude Historic World Food Summit

The Plan of Action contains seven commitments on the part of governments covering areas such as: conditions for economic and social progress leading to food security; poverty eradication and access to adequate food; sustainable increases in food production. Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) will monitor especially those actions in the Plan referring to land reform and rural development, labor-intensive technologies, and community-based self-reliance.

Franciscan Responsibility: "Food Security for All"—An Ethic of Sufficiency versus Over-Consumption

OUR PREMISE: The collaborative partnership of the NGO Forum's participants recalled the solidarity of the Franciscan family. As we seek to ensure food security for all people, we are emboldened by the historical witness of Francis and Clare on behalf of the poorest of the poor. This history recalls our Franciscan call to serve as the "voice of the voiceless."

THE CRISIS: Over-consumption by the rich must be controlled to ensure food security for all. Relying on the "free market system" to guarantee equitable food production and distribution is not a solution. New initiatives are necessary. We must encourage all people to move from self-centeredness to an ethic of sufficiency and sustainability. We proclaim as Franciscans: YES to sufficiency, NO to over-consumption!

OUR FRANCISCAN STAND

We are challenged and heartened by what we have learned and accomplished during this week together. Concretely, we need to work for the implementation of efforts toward food security at the following levels:

PERSONAL—Awareness of our over-consumption, that of families/communities, leads to action for food security for all.

LOCAL—We must raise the consciousness of our families, faith-communities, and those with who we collaborate by working actively for food security and linking with partner organizations on the local level.

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL —It is time to take our connections at the local level to a "higher plane" by aligning ourselves with like-minded national and international bodies. In particular, we shall advocate and involve ourselves in partnership with the marginally poor in their struggle to safeguard their rights in the face of economic and political systems which deny them food security.

In the Trenches

ORDINARY TIME

by Mary Zablocki, S.F.O

Advent is over, Christmas is over. Trees have been put on the curb, the decorations rest in the attic. We, the people of God, sigh deeply and look out our windows and think about Spring. Spring. Pouring through catalogs, picking out bulbs, planning our gardens, and waiting. For what are we waiting? For Lent, for renewal, for new life, for the celebration of our Risen Lord. And after Easter, with its glorious spiritual breath of fresh air, we start looking out the windows again. Waiting for summer, for the porch furniture to be brought out, for the kids to be out of school, for slower, more relaxed days and shorter nights. What is going on here? We spend our lives preparing and waiting, celebrating, cleaning up. We mark our lives by cyclical events and milestones and in between, for many of us, we either rummage through photographs of the last celebration, or plunge into preparations for the next.

What about building the kingdom? What about now? What about our reason for dragging one foot after the other out of bed on these dark cold winter mornings, our "settling down after Christmas," our passage through silent days and even deeper, darker nights.

How many of us "made it through" the holidays this year? Was it mourning we put on hold? Was it a financial crunch we worried about, or relatives we weren't sure we wanted to see? Maybe it was a rotten work schedule conflicting with our holiday, or an illness that threatened to suck the life out of our spirit and leave us with no strength to enjoy any company at all.

Maybe it was none of these things at all, and our holidays were filled with joy, the best we've ever had. Maybe the liturgies were breathtaking and the church more beautiful than ever. Perhaps this was the year we gave more and asked for less, and we are filled with the afterglow of grace that comes with sharing. Maybe there was an engagement or new baby or a great job offer to rejoice over.

But now, all the chairs are back in their usual places in the living room, the poinsettias and holly are gone from the windowsills. What do we do now? We can't just stare out the window at the garbage men collecting the Christmas trees. We can't just ache our way through our days, counting the minutes between crawling out of our beds and slipping back under our covers. No matter how busy the holidays were, how full and alive our homes were, it's over. It's ordinary time. We have ordinary work to do.

This is the time when no one puts in for vacation, no one really has plans, no one knows just what to expect of the weather. We may have made New Year's resolutions, and we may be faithfully working toward our goals. But these don't count as ordinary work for ordinary time. These are future things just like planning for Easter and Summer. They are good plans and it is good for us to have them. But someone is needed to do the work of Christmas now.

Imagine the shepherds--poor boys and men who witnessed a miracle but had to go back to the fields and watch the sheep. They were probably tempted to watch the sky instead, but they had a job to do, and the sky was silent. What about the wise men? They watched the star of Bethlehem for their whole journey and yet when they finally found the Infant Jesus, they simply paid Him homage and returned home. They came all that way and didn't even wait around to hear what he would say or see what he would do. Why? Because they had the work of Christmas to do. And the townsfolk? The innkeeper, the man who fed the Holy Family while they stayed in Bethlehem, the census taker who recorded their names? What of them? Joseph left Bethlehem as soon as the wise men went home, taking Mary and Jesus with him to Egypt. The people of Bethlehem returned to the business of living, the stable was probably swept clean, the census takers called back to Rome.

Ordinary time. But wait. If the days and weeks following the birth of Jesus were so ordinary, how is it that the stories stayed alive? What was it about the first "holidays" that made a difference in the days immediately following? The shepherds and the townspeople of Bethlehem, the wise men and the Roman occupational forces, the evil king Herod and his court went on doing just what they were doing before Jesus was born. What they did was no different. They were. The business of keeping the temple was the same, but Simeon and Anna were different. Simeon was finally able to embrace death because he finally embraced salvation in the person of the infant Jesus. The shepherds who returned to their flocks must have been changed. After all, they had just seen a poor baby lying in a manger being treated like a king by angels sent from heaven and gifted with gold and incense and myrrh by wandering strangers from exotic lands! That's enough to make any poor shepherd's head spin. And the wise men. Here we have three travelers of apparent wealth stopping in Jerusalem on their way to the lowly little town of Bethlehem. It was only after they inquired about the child that Herod took note of them and invited them to his court. Already the work of Christmas was begun. It wasn't the wise men who got Herod's attention. It was Jesus!

So, what is our work of Christmas? Simply to be changed. We have been touched by the baby in the manger. He gazes upon us, He reaches out to us, He allows us to hold Him. His touch, the very sight of Him, these things change us. Once we experience the Incarnation, we are never the same. Just like the shepherds, just like the wise men, we cannot help but drop to our knees and pay homage. But just like the shepherds, like the wise men, we must return home, go back to work, do the work of Christmas. The Incarnation makes our ordinary time extraordinary. The love of God turns our ordinary work into building of the kingdom of God. No matter what our ordinary work is, no matter if we speak or remain silent, walk or remain seated, go out to work or stay home and work, it is the change of heart that makes our work alive. We are changed. The manger is cold, we keep the baby warm. The skies are silent, we proclaim the good news. The wise men have taken their camels home, we honor the infant with gifts. It will never be over if we keep it alive, this spirit of Christmas. It is a simple thing really, as simple as waking and sleeping. It requires no specific skills or talents to be a kingdom builder, a shepherd works as well as a king. We simply have to allow change to take place.

So, as we stare out the window at the ordinary world, let us whisper a "Yes" to the gentle baby inside of us and rejoice as He takes hold of our hearts. It isn't necessary to do anything extraordinary, let us simply begin.

Franciscan Environmental Considerations for Meetings, Retreats and Conferences, Retreat and Conference Facilities, Friaries, Convents, Colleges, Universities, etc.

Prepared by the National Ecology Commission, Secular Franciscan Order, U.S.A.
107 Jensen Circle, West Springfield, MA 01089-4451 Phone (413) 737-7600; e-mail cspencer@mail.map.com

Secular Franciscan Order Rule: Chapter II, Article 18

"Moreover they should respect all creatures, animate and inanimate, which bear the 'imprint of the Most High,' and they should strive to move from the temptation of exploiting creation to the Franciscan concept of universal kinship."

- ☞ In reserving a conference facility, ask the Food Service Manager about **eliminating "throw away" disposables**---glass, aluminum, styrofoam, plastic and paper cups, plates, bowls, containers, wrappers, packets, tableware, napkins and table coverings. Ask for recycled paper products. Offer to supply recycled products if necessary.
- ☞ Request receptacles to be provided for **separating wastes**. Individual receptacles should be provided for vegetable food waste and soiled paper; glass; aluminum; tin and other recyclable metals; recyclable plastic; unsoiled paper; and non-recyclables, including laminates and food contaminated waste plus non-compostibles (meat and dairy products).
- ☞ Request **reusable** table service, beverage and condiment dispensers, pitchers, sugar bowls, creamers, bottles and jars for dressings, catsup and mustard, shakers for salt and pepper, etc.
- ☞ If washable cups cannot be provided for meals and breaks, ask attendees to **bring reusable cups or mugs** from home. Otherwise, print names on disposable cups for reuse.
- ☞ Request **cloth napkins** to be provided per week per attendee or resident. Leave the napkins in the dining hall between meals in personalized reusable paper envelopes.
- ☞ Request **vegetarian meals** featuring locally grown produce, organic (without chemical fertilizers and pesticides) if available. Food Service Managers are generally receptive if given advance notice. Note: Meat may contain antibiotics, tranquilizers, nitrites, mercury, dioxin, hormone disrupters, salmonella, E-coli, and possibly bovine spongiform encephalopathy.
- ☞ Encourage **whole, non-processed foods**. Read labels. Discourage processed food which usually contain chemical preservatives, colorants, flavorings, bleaching agents, emulsifiers, non-caking agents, sweetners, antioxidants, stabilizers, and other synthetics. Seek purity.
- ☞ Discourage **irradiated and genetically engineered foods**, such as milk products rendered from BST, rBGH or BGH which undermine the integrity of creation. BST, injected into cows, artificially boosts milk production while known to cause animal suffering.
- ☞ Provide herbal teas, bottled water, washed fruit and **whole grain snacks** at breaks and socials. Take breaks outside, if possible.
- ☞ Discourage the use of microwave ovens.
- ☞ Encourage a **smoke and scent free environment** without perfumes, aftershaves, colognes, pungent soaps, etc.
- ☞ Label **light, heat and air-conditioning switches**: "Turn off (or down) when not in use. Thank you." Use air-conditioning only when necessary, not for convenience.
- ☞ **Conserve water** always.
- ☞ Consider placing **fresh flowers** or a flower at gathering locations.
- ☞ Use **recycled paper** for printing, copies, folders, pads, labels, name tags, etc.---preferable, 100% post-consumer non-deinked, chlorine and acid free. Consider using kenaf paper, 100% tree-free. Provide receptacles for recycled paper in conference halls.
- ☞ Collect **plastic name tags** for reuse after conference.
- ☞ Replace **toxic chemical detergents** and other cleaning agents with safe, non-toxic, biodegradable products.
- ☞ Give life purpose. Create a **compost pile or bin** for food and yard refuse.
- ☞ Live **poison free**. Eliminate precautionary **insecticide applications** inside and out. If necessary, use non-toxic, localized applications only. Know the differences between insect friends and foes.
- ☞ **Landscape** with native ecological integrity. Allow God creative liberty. Pesticide use reflects fear, distrust and vanity.

Note: Suppliers of recycled paper and other "green" products are listed on the S.F.O. Ecology Commission WWW Page.

"Additional Contacts and Resources." WWW address: <http://pages.map.com/SecularFranciscanEcology>, or mail the National Ecology Commission.

Peace always.

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)



As Jim Flickinger, S.F.O., watched the news from Bosnia, he knew he must respond to the suffering. His mission began small but grew to exceed \$5 million in medical supplies for Bosnia. Jim did not *send* supplies. He made nine trips to deliver them, to ensure that materials reached those in need—often to the front lines. Corporations donated transportation. Vans were donated to assist in distribution. No donations were used for administration. No funds were solicited. "People just heard about the project and sent donations," Jim says. Each \$1 donated became \$65 in lifesaving supplies. After the cease-fire, a playground was built in Sarajevo to bring families together in an atmosphere of play and peace.

A Secular Franciscan for 16 years, Jim states, "I was attracted to St. Francis of Assisi because of his simplicity, his openness to do God's will." Jim emulates that openness to God's call. Jim, minister of Our Lady of Sorrows Secular Franciscan Fraternity in Grand Rapids, Michigan, is an attorney who pursues justice in the legal field and through caring acts.

Jim's efforts did not end with Bosnia. Word of his work spread to the Amazon region of Brazil known as "Green Hell." Originally a center for rubber harvests, the Manaus area is now a heavily populated jungle slum. Unemployment is high. The average income is \$70 per month. Three-fourths of the people live in shacks—20-24 people dwelling in garage-sized spaces.

The Secular Franciscan minister at St. Francis of Assisi parish in the Amazon diocese requested Jim's help to feed the lepers and educate "at risk" children. Nuns had educated children and aided lepers, but the government took over programs, returning only 10 percent of the funds to beneficiaries. Secular Franciscans are able to send funds directly to needed programs. Jim went to the Amazon and met many of the 35,000 afflicted with Hansen's disease. "One man had no face. Others have no fingers or legs. They move about on little trolleys. Yet everyone was so full of joy!" Fr. Martin Laumann, a priest from Wisconsin, pastors his parish of thousands. They have great faith, but little else. Jim Flickinger wants to add to what they have.

*Amazon Relief
1745 Lake Michigan Drive, NW
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49504*

Editor's Note: Marie Amore, S.F.O., suggested "The Lampstand" as a way to tell the stories of Secular Franciscans who live the Gospel to life and life to the Gospel. Tell about a Secular you know.

Send articles to:

Patti Normile, S.F.O.
TAU-USA Editor
609 Amherst Ave.
Terrace Park, OH 45174



S.F.O. BOOKSHELF...

Praying with Anthony of Padua

by Madeline Pecora Nugent, S.F.O.

Publisher: St. Mary's Press, Winona, MN

Excerpts from the life of St. Anthony, set against his prayers and adaptations from Scripture, lend a unique flavor to the journey in prayer undertaken in this book. The author, well versed in the life and legends of St. Anthony of Padua, guides one, topic by topic, through his profound spirituality. This is not a warm chat with Anthony. Rather, you jump in with both feet, experiencing the issues of today's world in the light of his insights.

Journal writing and other suggested activities, which keep the book ever-fresh for future study, help one explore specific thoughts, spiritual ideas and relationships. Such introspection can enhance spiritual and personal growth. The emphasis on feelings/emotions gives balance to the spiritual dimension of study.

As a source of guided study, this book will appeal to a select audience, those looking for more on St. Anthony of Padua or those just discovering that apostolate only comes from a dedicated prayer life!

*review by Pat Brandwein-Ball, S.F.O.
St. Elizabeth of Hungary Region*

CNSA Preparing Course for Spiritual Assistants

The Conference of National Spiritual Assistants to the S.F.O. is creating a course to prepare Franciscan religious and diocesan clergy as spiritual assistants and to authorize Secular Franciscans to be lay animators of fraternities. The course, to be given under the auspices of provincial spiritual assistants, will be presented either as a correspondence course or as a workshop.

The basic text for the course will be the Handbook for Spiritual Assistance to the Secular Franciscan Order. The CNSA evaluated and adopted particulars of the course at its January, 1997, meeting. If approved, the course will be introduced to provincial and regional spiritual assistants at their annual meeting at Mt. St. Francis, Indiana, September 16-19, 1997.

A Correction/Clarification

I wish to thank editor Patti Normile, S.F.O., for including me with those very holy and apostolic Seculars who were featured in past issues under the heading *The Lampstand* [fall issue]. I sincerely feel that I do not deserve such an honor. This letter is written to correct the last paragraph of the article. What I was quoted as saying in the interview is not my belief concerning "holiness." Closer to what I intended to say is embodied in the following paragraph:

Through Baptism, we are all called to holiness. I believe that we can, and should, bring this holiness to the everyday events of our life. Our holiness is not confined to the acknowledged holy places. God's holy grace exists outside of the temple. The birth of a child is a sacred event and a time of holiness for the mother and the father. Also, there is holiness in true reconciliation. These grace filled events should be acknowledged as being holy.

Thank you for allowing me to clarify my beliefs. Thanks again for a very good newsletter. The holiness of the contributors shines forth through their written words.

Bill Wicks, S.F.O.



(Art work by Jaime Bernardo)

Facilitators will lead groups of 10-12 Secular Franciscans, divided into Congress fraternities, to explore the theme in daily subtext topics as shown below. Special speakers, homilies and reflections at the liturgies, and seminars will provide insights into the daily subtexts for further study by each Congress fraternity.

Wednesday, July 16	<i>"Telling Our Stories, Remembering Our Traditions"</i>
Thursday, July 17	<i>"Naming Our Present Experience"</i>
Friday, July 18	<i>"New Models for the New Millennium"</i>
Saturday, July 19	<i>"The Time is Now, The Kingdom is at Hand"</i>

Optional afternoon tours of the surrounding attractions will be available:

Hagley Museum/Longwood Gardens
Historic Philadelphia City Tour
Winterthur Museum/Longwood Gardens

Other Special Events:

Seminars on the subtext of "new models."
An evening concert by music composer and liturgist Marty Haugen.
Special interest sessions and evening socials.
A simple outdoor supper.

Arrangements have been for a block of rooms for those who wish to stay off campus for the Congress. The rooms will consist of either two double beds one queen size bed, bath with shower (bath with tub on request), phones, cable TV, computer jacks, smoking/non-smoking rooms. A continental breakfast is included. There are no pool facilities or exercise room. The motel is located just off I 95, two and a half miles from Clayton Hall. Rates for S.F.O. Congress participants: \$56.00 plus tax, \$5.00 for each additional person. Children under 18 are free. These rates will apply if reservations are made before June 30. Contact: **SLEEP INN**

630 College Ave.
Newark DE 19713
Telephone (302) 453-1700 FAX (302) 453-17170

15th National Quinquennial:

A Preview

*"The Time is Now,
The Kingdom of God is at Hand"*

*Franciscans and the Coming of the
Third Millennium*

QUINQUENNIAL CONGRESS PRAYER IV

We lift up our hearts to you, O Lord.
Hear us and let our prayers rise before you like incense.

Lamb of God,
We pray for our leaders, your anointed ones.
Remind them that they did not choose you,
but you chose them to love and protect those you have placed in their care.

Shepherd of souls, guide and protect the evangelists in our midst.
Guard them from all evil and bless them as they proclaim
that the Kingdom of God is at hand right now!

As we await our Quinquennial Congress, give us
the grace to abandon ourselves to you,
the desire to do your Will above all else,
the wisdom to discern your voice from false voices, and
the courage to let your Will decide our actions.

We ask you, Lord, for passion to commit wholeheartedly
to the life-changing vision of Saint Francis.
We ask for the grace to be living examples, wherever we may be,
of our profession into the Secular Franciscan Order and Gospel Life.

God of Peter, John, and Mary Magdalen,
fill us with such intimate knowledge of you
that our only desire will be "Thy Kingdom Come!"

Give us the trust and dependence of a Peter who understood
that you alone had the words of eternal life.
Give us the innocence and intimacy of a John who never doubted
he could lay his head upon your breast.
And give us the burning love of a Mary Magdalene,
who recognized your voice (if not your face)
and proclaimed for the first time that you live!

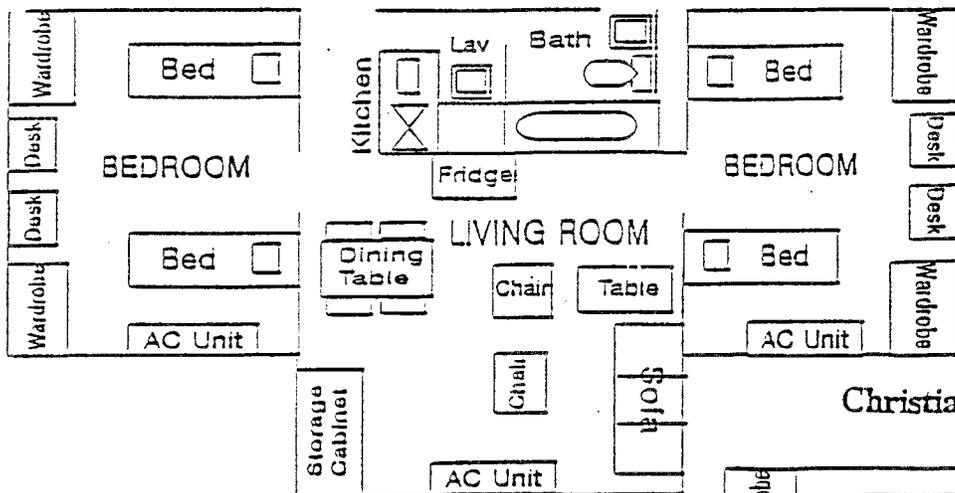
We ask your blessing upon us, our Congress, and our Order
in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

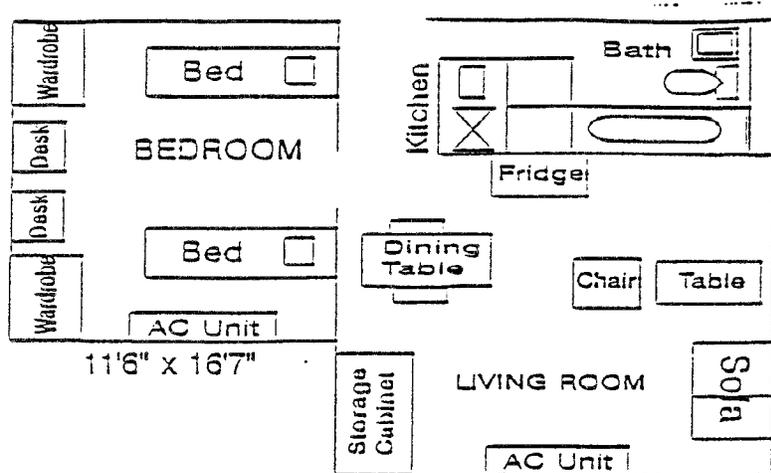
The Planning Committee hopes all Secular Franciscans will be involved in planning the Congress through this prayer.

The 1997 Quinquennial Congress-July 15-20-University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware

Christiana Two-Bedroom Apartment



Christiana One-Bedroom Apartment



FLOOR PLAN OF APARTMENTS
COST DETAIL ON REGISTRATION

The University of Delaware is committed to assuring equal opportunity to all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, gender, age, religion, national origin, veteran, or handicapped status, or sexual orientation in its educational programs, activities, admissions or employment practices as required by Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other applicable statutes. Inquiries concerning section 504 and ADA compliance and information regarding campus accessibility and/or accommodations should be referred to the office of the ADA Coordinator. Inquires regarding Title IX and Title VI should be referred to the Office of the Director of Affirmative Action. Both offices are located at 305 Hulliher Hall. The phone number is (V) (302) 831-2835, (TDD) (302) 831-4552.

EXTRA SERVICES: Check if you wish information on the services listed below:

_____ Handicap access and services (Please specify needs)

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS: To request disability accommodations, contact Conference Services at least 10 days in advance of the program. 302/ 831- 2214 (voice), 302/831-4552 (TDD), 302/8831-7998(FAX).

_____ Shuttle buses from Philadelphia Airport or Wilmington Train Station
(cost will be approximately \$45)

_____ Afternoon bus tours (available for Thursday, July 17th)

_____ Day Sessions (if you are interested in one or more daily sessions only)

_____ Information on NON-PARTICIPATING family members costs and services



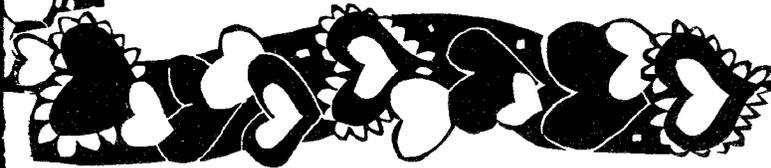
Let Jesus Change Your Heart

by *Patrycia Lukac, S.F.O.*

As we travel along our spiritual journey we make use of necessary exterior practices. We recite verbal prayers. We serve our neighbor. We attend Mass and avail ourselves of the sacraments. However, as we perform these acts and recite these words we must never forget that if they are not accompanied by an ardent desire for change and a true openness to the working of the Spirit then much of the grace that we might obtain through these actions will be lost.

We have often been told that we are to be saints, or even more daunting, we are to become like Christ Himself. If we stop to think about this goal of our Christian life, as we should on a daily basis, it may seem impossible to achieve. The good news is that it is not! We are to be made new. We are to allow our hearts to be transformed by the love of God. In place of our "stony heart," which are often motivated by selfishness, we are to be filled with peace and goodwill that characterized our Lord and Savior's life on this earth.

"But how?" Many of us ask, who have struggled for a change of heart over many years, only to find the same faults that plagues us twenty years ago still very much in evidence. Perhaps the answer is to give up the struggle and allow Jesus to do the work. That kind of surrender is the beginning of a spirituality that is not only exterior but floods the very core of our being.



Teach Peace---Peace Schools

In the Franciscan spirit of peacemaking, the Executive Council of NAFRA is gathering information to explore the possibility of developing a national project for the S.F.O. We will gather and create materials related to conflict resolution skills, tapping into creative rather than destructive behavior, classroom activities with the possibility of making a program available to schools

We need to know what programs already exist. Can you help? Are you interested? Discover what is going on in your community. Please send the names of contact people, sample programs, ideas, etc., to: Patti Normile, S.F.O.,

TAU-USA Editor

609 Amherst Ave.

Terrace Park, OH 45174

FAX (513) 831-7542

The Spirituality of Being Third Class

The fall issue of TAU-USA was delayed in production a bit. We waited for the conclusion of the National Council meeting in California. We worked through a new system with Elizabeth Feetterers doing the layout. And we doubled the size. Then we waited for TAU-USA to arrive in your mailboxes...and waited....and waited.

As we waited, snows smothered the Midwest (TAU-USA is mailed from Kansas). The snows abated...and we waited. Our very trustworthy printer, Dave Barbo, checked with the U.S. Postal Service about where our newsletter might be. The response was kind of a "who knows?" Third class mail gets little respect and no tracking. Our thousands of newsletters might be stacked in a sorting center some place. They might be sorted soon—they might not be.

Wondering about the whereabouts of third class mail raises questions about those who are "third class citizens." That is, those who may be considered third class in the eyes of the world. God surely doesn't categorize his creation in such strata. When systems slow down or cease to function, as during the blizzards of early winter in the Midwest, the third class gets tossed into a corner and forgotten—at least for the time being.

The mentality about the third class mail is that if you don't pay as much you don't get as much. That same idea permeates much of society's thinking about the poor—the human "third class." They don't pay as much, or earn as much. Therefore, they don't deserve as much. Francis observe this third class mentality in his culture. That is why he left the moneyed class. That is why he cared for the lepers. That is why he befriended a wolf. That is why he did not retaliate when robbed by ruffians along the road.

Third class mail causes us to think about the spirituality of being third class people. How do we respond to them?

P.S. Hope your Fall, 1996 TAU-USA has arrived in your mailbox. If not, we apologize for the system.

WANTED---Family Photos

Family Commission Chair, Carol Gentile, S.F.O., requests each Secular Franciscan to send a family picture in anticipation of the next National Fraternity meeting. Pictures might be shared at your local fraternity meeting and then sent together to: Carol Gentile, S.F.O.

Family Commission Chair

136 Woods Ave.

Monaca, PA 15061

How happy and blest are they who love the Lord and do what Lord and do what the Lord himself says in the Gospel

(Letter to All the Faithful)



New Beginnings

Therese and Dave Ream, S.F.O., Co-chairs, National Formation Commission

"Let us begin, brothers [and sisters], to serve the Lord God, for up to now we have made little or no progress." (1 Celano, #103)

The Lord give you peace! This first issue of TAU-USA in the new year brings with it the reestablishment of a section of the newsletter dedicated to ongoing formation in the Secular Franciscan Order. As in the past this section will again feature articles written by chairpersons or members of the four National Apostolic Commissions (Ecology, Family, Peace & Justice and Work), the Formation Commission and possibly the Youth Commission. Each of these articles will conclude with a few thought-provoking questions intended to serve as catalysts for personal application, discussion and faith sharing during the Ongoing Formation experience at the fraternity's regular gathering.

You may already know that the following Secular Franciscans currently serve the National Fraternity as Chairpersons of National Commissions: Charlie Spencer, S.F.O., Ecology; Carol Gentile, S.F.O., Family; Jim McIntosh, S.F.O., Peace & Justice; Mary & Ed Zablocki, S.F.O., Work; Mary & Anthony Mazotti, S.F.O., Youth; Therese & Dave Ream, S.F.O., Formation. During the past six months this group has actively collaborated in more fully coordinating the work of their respective Commissions. For example, when this group of Commission Chairs meets, it will benefit from the Spiritual Assistance of Father Richard Trezza, O.F.M., in addition to the coordinating role served by Mary Mazotti, S.F.O. The Commission chairs have each made significant contributions to the Inquirers' Handbook, an initial formation resource which will be published later this year. They are also in the process of putting together a Manual for Apostolic Commissions, a compendium of practical advice and suggestions intended for use at every level of fraternity. Plans are in the discussion phase for a Commission conference to be held during the summer of 1998 in which most of the Commissions will participate. Beginning with this issue of TAU-USA, the Ongoing Formation articles will evidence a unifying theme, although the way in which each article is written will clearly reflect the individual style of each author. This issue's theme is an introduction or reintroduction to the Apostolic Commissions.

In many ways the new year of 1997 marks a new beginning for each of us and for all of us. Among the Commissions which serve the National Fraternity there is a deeper awareness that our common vocation "to observe the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by following the example of Saint Francis of Assisi" (*Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order*, article #4) powerfully serves to unite us. Each Commission surely has its own particular and specific focus; yet the apostolic and formative efforts of each Commission are all directed to one final end: to know the one true God and to know the one whom God has sent, Jesus Christ (cf John 17:3).

ATTENTION: Regional Formation Directors! In the effort to facilitate communication among those involved in the ministry of formation at the regional and national levels of fraternity, the National Formation Commission is compiling what we hope will be an accurate and up-to-date listing of Regional Formation Directors in the country. We have some information, but are still missing information for the following regions:

St. Francis
St. Thomas More
Holy Trinity
Blessed Katharine Drexel
St. Elizabeth of Hungary
The Tau Cross, Emerging

Blessed Junipero Serra
Mother Cabrini
Lady Poverty
Santa Maria de Las Montanas
Our Lady of Guadalupe
Juan de Padilla

Queen of Peace
St. Joan of Arc
Solanus Casey
Our Lady of the Angels
Empress of the Americas

If you are currently serving as the Regional Formation Director for any of these regions or if you were recently (within the past 3-6 months) elected as your region's Formation Director, please send your name, street address, phone number and e-mail address to:

Therese and Dave Ream, S.F.O., Co-Chairs, National Formation Commission
 UMBRIA
 R.R. #3
 Orrick Road
 Kirksville, MO 63501-9803
 e mail: umbria@sprynet.com

Thank you, and may the Lord give you peace.

A First---Seven Candidates Professed in Nation's Oldest Parish

On October 5, 1996, an overflow crowd of worshipers, Secular Franciscans, family members and friends witnessed the Profession of seven new members of the Secular Franciscan Order in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel of the historic Cathedral-Basilica of St. Augustine Florida. Although the diocese is currently celebrating its 125th anniversary, the parish itself is the nation's oldest, dating back to 1565.

The newly professed brothers and sisters are Faith Fletcher, S.F.O., Dr. Philip Keough, S.F.O., Madeline Murray, S.F.O., and Helen Pascal, S.F.O., of St. Augustine; Helen Dworan, S.F.O., Anne Soltis, S.F.O., and Jack Soltis, S.F.O., of Palm Coast.

Fr. Robert Baker, S.F.O., Cathedral Rector and Spiritual Assistant to the local Fraternity, celebrated the Eucharist and presided over the ceremony assisted by Fr. Rene Robert, chaplain to the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind; and Deacon Richard Arsenault, Regional Formation Minister. Francis Nigrelli, S.F.O., Minister, and Cathy Arsenault, S.F.O., of the St. Augustine Fraternity also took part.

A reception was held in the Cathedral parish rectory to give all present an opportunity to meet and congratulate the newly professed Secular Franciscans.

YUFRA Group---TAU PETER

Our YUFRA group, TAU-PETER, began in September, 1996, with five boys and five girls, ages 14-17, who attended Riverside Public High School and Holy Cross Catholic High School in Riverside, New Jersey.

TAU-PETER meets monthly after the 9:30 "Family Mass" in the Franciscan Center, a comfortable room in the basement of the convent. Meetings follow the S.F.O. format: prayer, song, business, formation, fraternity (refreshments and socializing). The formation teams consists of Fr. Michael McCafferty, O.F.M. Conv., Spiritual Assistant; Sr. Bernice Eib, O.S.F., Formation Director; Richard Kolbush, S.F.O., and Frank Flaherty, S.F.O. Formation consists of discussing Gospel passages and different aspects of St. Francis' life with application to their own lives.

In September the YUFRA members, introduced and welcomed publicly during the 9:30 Mass, received a brief life of St. Francis of Assisi. After three months the group received the San Damiano Cross and a copy of the S.F.O. Rule during the Mass as a sign of commitment.

Group activities include: making posters for the meeting room, conducting an oral history of Riverside by interviewing senior citizens and recording memories of long ago, collecting food for St. Vincent de Paul Society at Christmas, adopting the Blessed Katharine Drexel Secular Franciscan Order Region by individual praying for fraternities in the Region, attending the S.F.O. annual picnic, and participating in an S.F.O. tree planting ceremony.

"It is for the Devil and his limbs to be sad, but for us always to be cheerful and happy in the Lord."

From The Mirror of Perfection

S.F.O.'s Un LTD

Are you interested in meeting Secular Franciscans from far afield? Are you isolated out in the country with nary a nearby Franciscan?

S.F.O.'s UnLTD is a list of Secular Franciscans who are interested in corresponding with other Seculars. This list is published four times a year. If you would like more information please send a business size, self-addressed, stamped envelope and a quarter —OR, if you are outside the United States, four International Reply Coupons, to:

M. Marko, S.F.O., S.F.O.'s UnLTD
300 North State Street #3426
Chicago, Illinois 60610 USA

Sometimes We Forget

Many times we forget that we are Franciscans in our daily lives. We wear the Tau Cross every day. We remember that we are Franciscans when we put the cross on in the morning, and then sometimes we forget, in the heat of the moments of our busy lives, that we are Franciscans. Say to yourself, "I am a Franciscan." Remember these words when someone's words hurt you; when you get impatient with others. "I am a Franciscan, I will forgive." When you hear someone's gossip; "I am a Franciscan, and I will not repeat these words." Does it always work? No, we are not perfect. Practice makes perfect.

Our Lady Queen of the Angels Fraternity, Lancaster, PA

READ—CHECK and PASS TAU-USA ALONG

_____ Minister	_____ Ecology
_____ Vice Minister	_____ Councilors
_____ Secretary	_____ Work
_____ Treasurer	_____ Peace & Justice
_____ Formation	_____ Others
_____ Family	

A Wonderful Abundance

So much wonderful material has been sent to the editor of TAU-USA that it was not possible to include some articles in this issue. The Spring issue of TAU-USA will include the next article in a series on prayer written by Teresa V. Baker, S.F.O., along with other items we were not able to include in this edition. We thank you for sharing your thoughts, insights and talents with us. The Secular Franciscan Order is truly blessed with wonderful people. Please continue to send items to Patti Normile, Editor, TAU-USA.



National Franciscan Youth, An Update

*Anthony and Mary Mazotti, S.F.O., Co-Chairs,
National Franciscan Youth Commission
P.O. Box 2571, Arnold, CA 95223-2571*

Since the establishment of the National Franciscan Youth Commission in October, 1995, a lot of enthusiasm and excitement has been generated throughout the United States over the encouragement of establishing Franciscan youth groups.

After researching the country for ideas from existing Franciscan youth groups, parochial and general teen groups, the Commission developed a "Packet of Starter Ideas" for leaders wishing to start a Franciscan Youth Group. Thus far, there have been about 100 requests for the packets from Religious men and women, Catholic High Schools, CCD Coordinators, parishes and Seculars. Many were encouraged that the Franciscan youth Ministry was being given coordinated support and direction.

No specific Franciscan Youth Program has been adopted by the S.F.O. National Fraternity. Though the packet includes a copy of the S.F.O. International approved Franciscan Youth Document, the Commission is encouraging experimentations that fit cultural and geographic areas. Caution is recommended to "start small and go slowly."

The National Commission members are: Eileen Costa, S.F.O., Catherine Meibert, S.F.O., Deacon Oscar Perez and Kathy Taormina, S.F.O. The Commission held their first meeting in January to plan goals and future youth events, including plans for outreach to college students and Franciscan Children. Your prayers for God's blessings are sincerely appreciated. For information about Franciscan Youth please write to Anthony and Mary Mazotti, S.F.O.

Stop, Look, and Listen to This

As an American, do you realize what you have compared to the poorest of the poor in the world? Suppose you had to do these things:

1. Remove the furniture in your home, leaving only a few old blankets, a table and a wooden chair. Remember, you've never had a bed.
2. Each family member may keep *only four articles of clothing*. *The head of the family may keep his or her shoes.*
3. Keep a box of matches, a small bag of flour, some sugar and salt, a few onions and a dish of dried beans, a few potatoes. That's tonight's meal.
4. Shut off the running water, take out the wiring, the lights, and everything that's run by electricity.
5. Take away the house and move the family into a tool shed.
6. Cancel the newspaper, throw out the books. You won't miss them, because you are illiterate. No radio or television either.
7. The mail carrier, firefighters, and all services are gone. The two classroom school is three miles away.
8. There's no hospital and no doctor. The closest clinic is ten miles away with a midwife in charge. Get there by bicycle....if you have one.
9. Start cultivating your three acres and find a way for your children to bring in a little money so you will have something to eat most days. It won't be enough to keep your healthy, so *lo*p 25 years off your life.

Still feel like complaining? I don't think so! We do have a good life, so work hard to make it even better, always remembering from Whom all of our blessings come.

Excerpt from Divine Mercy Region

Do You Know?

**Rates of Decomposition
for Various Forms of Litter.**

- ⊗ Paper→2 to 5 months
- ⊗ Orange Peels→6 months
- ⊗ Milk Cartons→5 years
- ⊗ Filter Tip Cigarettes→10-12 years
- ⊗ Leather Shoes→25-40 years
- ⊗ Plastic Containers→50-80 years
- ⊗ Tin Cans→100 years
- ⊗ Aluminum Cans→100 years
- ⊗ Styrofoam→NEVER

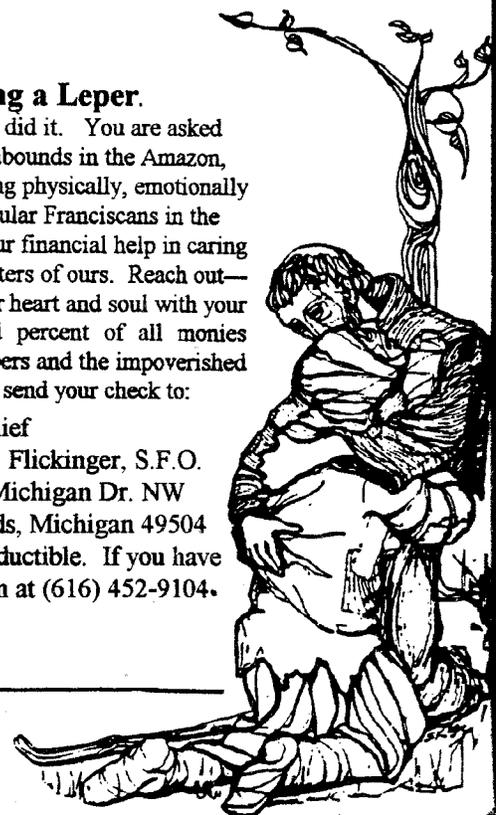
from Canticle of Creation

Embracing a Leper.

Christ did it. St. Francis did it. You are asked to do it. Leprosy abounds in the Amazon, and the lepers are suffering physically, emotionally and financially. The Secular Franciscans in the Amazon have asked for our financial help in caring for these brothers and sisters of ours. Reach out—touch a leper and his or her heart and soul with your support. One hundred percent of all monies donated to support the lepers and the impoverished in the Amazon. To help, send your check to:

Amazon Relief
c/o James B. Flickinger, S.F.O.
1745 Lake Michigan Dr. NW
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49504

Donations are tax-deductible. If you have any questions call Jim at (616) 452-9104.



HAPPENINGS

S.F.O. NETWORKING CORNER

Below are names and addresses of Seculars interested in networking with other Seculars of similar interests. With courtesy and love, doors can open to new and rewarding friendships. To be listed, send name, address and interest/profession to:

Mrs. Mary K. Mazotti, S.F.O. Networking
P. O. Box 2571, Arnold, CA 95223-2571

Names will be printed once. Save lists.

Darleen Mills, S.F.O.

100 Park Drive

Aliquippa, PA 15001-1622

Owner "Gifts and Talents" & full-time business student; music, CCD & youth ministry, ecology commission; interests: roller skating, reading, praying, friends (including pets), family, fraternity and nature.

Write and let us know how the S.F.O. Networking Corner benefits you.

Living by Faith

Ed Horvat, S.F.O., linked his writing and pastoral skills with another writer through the S.F.O. Networking Corner. Result--Ed has become the editor of "Living by Faith," a publication produced primarily for shut-in S.F.O. members but interesting reading for all. For information about ordering "Living by Faith" contact:

Geraldine Rome, S.F.O.

12266 N. Lakeview Drive

Baton Rouge, LA 70810

Phone/Fax: (504) 766-4602

INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY FRANCISCAN LIFE

St. Francis College offers a correspondence program on contemporary Franciscan living. First course, FRAN201, is a 3-credit course; cost, \$275. For information, contact St. Francis College, Loretto, PA, (814) 472-3219.

As the newsletter of a non-profit organization, TAU-USA has been advised to publish only promotions for endeavors directly associated with the National Fraternity. To promote materials, tours, conferences, etc. that are not exclusively Secular Franciscan might be construed as "advertising" thus jeopardizing our non-profit status.

Franciscan Family Apostolate

More than 200 families are awaiting sponsors. For information about supporting an impoverished family in India through SFO sanctioned, Franciscan Family Apostolate, contact:

Alan Ouimet, S.F.O.

Franciscan Family Apostolate

303 Church Street

Guilford, CT 06437

Franciscan Family Apostolate may be able to provide a speaker for your regional meeting.

For information contact Alan Ouimet

DOES YOUR FRATERNITY NEED A MINISTRY?

Consider CHAP--Church Assistance Program-- designed to enable groups to assist those needing assistance with drug/alcohol abuse/addiction, mental health problems such as eating disorders and depression. For information contact Carol Gentile, S.F.O., NAFRA Family Chairperson, 136 Woods Avenue, Monaca, PA 15061 (412) 775-4248

NEXT TAU-USA DEADLINE: April 15, 1997

Submit articles to: Patti Normile, S.F.O., Editor, TAU-USA

609 Amherst Avenue

Terrace Park, OH 45174

FAX (513) 831-7542

Only articles which are signed, and have a return address, will be considered.

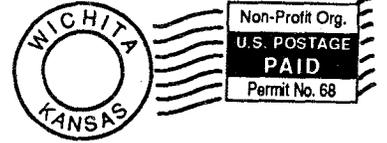
(Computer disk adaptable to WordPerfect 6.0 is appreciated.)

For subscription information or change of address:

See back of TAU-USA.

The right to copy all material printed in TAU-USA is granted. Please credit TAU-USA and author if noted.

SECULAR FRANCISCAN PUBLICATIONS
NATIONAL FRATERNITY
SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER
108 N MAIN ST - PO BOX 189
LINDSBORG KS 67456-0189



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



REMINDER

Have you sent in your registration for the 15th S.F.O. National Fraternity Quinquennial Congress? Don't miss this very special gathering. This is a wonderful way to meet some of your Franciscan brothers and sisters from across the country. Make some new friends. Renew some old friendships. Enjoy some good music with Marty Haugen. Listen to some wonderful speakers. Come to the Congress. Be refreshed and renewed in your commitment to the Franciscan way of life.

Please plan on joining us at the University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware, July 15-20, 1997.

PRIVATE SUBSCRIBERS, PLEASE CHECK EXPIRATION DATE ABOVE.
(Renewals are due 30 days after renewal date to insure uninterrupted mailings.)

New Subscription _____ Renewal _____ How many years _____ Change of Address _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please make check payable to NAFRA and send to: TAU-USA
The National Fraternity
Secular Franciscan Order
c/o Dolores Smelko, S.F.O.
RD 1, Box 155
Anita, PA 15711

Domestic subscriptions are \$4.00 per year (4 issues); Canadian, \$5.00; foreign, \$6.00. If this is a renewal, and your name and address on this newsletter are correct, please simply check renewal.