

TAU- USA



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

News letter

Most High, all power-full,
good Lord, Yours are the
praises, the glory, and the
honor and all blessing.
To You alone, Most High, do
they belong and no human is
worthy to mention Your name.



2009—2012

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SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

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Dear brothers and sisters in St. Francis,

Get ready dear readers, this special formation issue of the *TAU-USA* is filled with such exciting, entertaining and educational articles that it will be hard to put down once you start reading.

First and foremost of course, are the many articles written about the “For Up to Now” (FUN) formation manual. This issue captures the essence of the manual and presents it from every point of view. We hear from the members of the National Formation Commission, and from ministers and formation directors who were good enough to share their experience and expertise. We hear from several regions who have held their first presentations in “Forming the Formators” workshops; we hear from regional ministers who share their thoughts and concerns; and learn of their future plans for implementing the manual.

As you read the articles, it is clear that FUN is not just for the newcomers to our beloved order, it also serves as a rejuvenating shot-in-the-arm for the rest of us. I must admit that I am filled with renewed pride in being a Secular Franciscan, and in seeing the incredible dedication and love in the creation and presentation of this wonderful manual. These are indeed exciting times for our order. Our National Formation Commission has clearly done what was theirs to do, but they haven’t stopped there. Turn to page 40, you’ll find that they are welcoming invitations from the regions, to attend workshops, give presentations and answer questions “on the spot.” They are so invested in FUN that they are willing to give more of their time and efforts while asking only for room and board.

It is now our turn; let us begin—together.

Anna



CELEBRATING THE 8TH CENTENARY OF
THE CONSECRATION OF ST. CLARE
April 16, 2011—August 11, 2012

FOR TABLE
OF CONTENTS
SEE PAGE 11

INFORMATION, FORMATION, TRANSFORMATION

Beloved Brothers and Sisters of Penance,

May the Lord give us Peace!

Permit me to continue the discussion started two *TAU-USA* articles ago in the four marks of a Franciscan Gathering: "Prayer, Formation, Fraternal Sharing and Necessary Business, and in this order!" *TAU-USA Winter 2010 Issue 69*,

www.nafra-sfo.org/tau-usa/articles/winter10/minister_winter10.pdf and continued in "The Primary Focus and the Four Marks of a Vibrant Secular Franciscan Fraternity"

TAU-USA Spring 2011 Issue 70,

www.nafra-sfo.org/tau-usa/articles/spring11/minister_spring11.pdf.



Both articles stress the importance of formation, the focus of this article, as well as this entire issue of *TAU-USA*.

As I've written before, our fraternities need to pray for, work and focus on true Secular Franciscan formation for every member. We need to be attracting new people, forming them, and forming ourselves closer to Jesus Christ in the footsteps of Sts. Francis and Clare always and all ways.

This formation is a threefold process of information to effect formation in a process of continual transformation. We take pertinent information from the Gospels, from Holy Mother Church, from the lives of Sts. Francis and Clare and all the Franciscan saints, and from our own SFO Rule and General Constitutions, to structure and effect formation.

With the grace of God, this formation, if effective, achieves transformation, "that radical interior change which the gospel itself calls 'conversion.' Human frailty makes it necessary that this conversion be carried out daily" (*SFO Rule, Article 7*).

A great step along this process of information, formation and transformation has been accomplished by the completion of our Foundational Formation Manual (2011) in response to the International Formation Manual (2008). I cannot imagine this comprehensive, foundational 460-page Formation Manual with an unbelievably rich accompanying CD of Reference Material being supplanted in my lifetime.

To introduce and help implement this Foundational Formation Manual, as many of you know, this past May we celebrated a National Formation Workshop at the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville, Illinois, with all our excellent National Formation Commission: **Robert L. Fitzsimmons (Fitz)**, SFO, Chair and Minister of Troubadours of Peace Regional Fraternity; **Friar Richard Trezza, OFM**; **Jan Parker, SFO**, (our National Secretary); **Kathleen White, SFO**; and **Rena Xuerub, SFO**, plus **Mary Bittner, SFO**, (our National Councilor); and three of our four National Spiritual Assistants: **Friar Lester Bach, OFM Cap**; **Friar Bob Brady, OFM**; and **Friar Stephen Gross, OFM Conv.**

I want to especially thank the 18 Regional Ministers who contributed their valuable time and resources to this workshop:

(Continued on page 3)

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

These translations may be found online at our NAFRA website:

http://www.nafra-sfo.org/tau-usa/tau_newarticles.html#lbf



(Continued from page 2)

- Joanne Angeletti** - Minister of
St. Maximilian Kolbe Region
- Ken Beattie** - Minister of La Verna Region
- Mary Frances Charsky** - Minister of
Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha Region
- Alice Crews** - Minister of Juan de Padilla Region
- Joan Geiger** - Minister of Tau Cross Region
- Sally Haddad** - Minister of Fr. Solanus Casey Region
- Sheri Hafeli** - Minister of Divine Mercy Region
- Vickie Klick** - Minister of Mother Cabrini Region
- Mary Anne Lenzi** - Minister of
Santa Maria de las Montañas Region
- Sylvia Paoli** - Minister of St. Francis Region
- Jerry Rousseau** - Minister of
Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region
- Susan Simeone** - Minister of St. Thomas More Region
- Sherry Stevenson** - Minister of St. Clare Region
- Frank Vargo** - Minister of Our Lady of Indiana Region
- Mattie Ward** - Minister of St. Katharine Drexel Region
- Cindy Wesley** - Minister of Bl. Junipero Serra Region
- Steve White** - Minister of Holy Trinity Region

Thanks as well to the 23 Regional Formation Ministers and other SFOs who attended from Regions all across the United States, 128 SFOs in all, the largest SFO Gathering in the United States since the "Q" in 2007! Wow! What a blessing!

I loved being with family, family known and family I had never met before! We prayed, formed, studied, shared, sang and attended Mass together; and every attendee received a print copy of the 460-page Formation Manual, plus the CD. In addition, every Region who attended received an electronic Adobe copy of the Formation Manual.

With and only with the help of the Holy Spirit, the work now is to get this Formation Manual into the hands, spirits, hearts and minds of every SFO in the United States. As National Minister, as a writer of one of the introductions and one of the chapters in this Foundational Formation Manual, and as an attendee at the National Workshop, I am heavily invested in this process.

I beg for your prayers and assistance in this effort. In addition, as Chair of the Duns Scotus Fund Board of Trustees, I am also strongly encouraging any fraternity, Regional or Local, that would like to help us in this effort, but may lack sufficient funds, to apply directly for financial assistance to our beloved Secretary of the Duns Scotus Board, Anne Mulqueen. anne_mulqueen@mac.com



Our Risen Savior Jesus Christ is the Gate (John 10:9), but Bob Fitzsimmons (Fitz) and the National Formation Commission (NFC) are the gatekeepers for further distribution of these fundamental, foundational Formation materials. The National Executive Council has asked that all these materials be distributed at cost. These materials have been translated into Spanish and are currently being translated into Korean. The NFC can be reached at www.nafraformation.org; and about these materials, Fitz can be reached at nfcnafra@frontier.com.



3

A National Formation Manual Blog has already been set up by our beloved Webpage Master Vickie Klick at <http://foruptonow.blogspot.com/?psininvite=ALRopfWJ2XjOmSAACLqHP9WR8CCR5YBTiDf9Q0qFLwCC8dpsXLRTOwSxL6c-CDtZXog3YdMYua8aMRMPONiXe85G9RkweoGD2A>.



Some Regions have already held and are currently planning Regional Workshops on these Formation materials, and our upcoming National Gathering in California from October 25 to 30, 2011, will further address continued implementation of these materials.

My beloved Sisters and Brothers of Penance, help us build up our Secular Franciscan Order, our entire Franciscan Family, our Church and our world by forming those God brings to our Order exactly as God wants us to form them, and, in the process, allow God to form us anew. "Behold, I make all things new" (Revelation 21:5).

With prayers for Christ's Peace
and Love to all of you,

Tom

NATIONAL FORMATION COMMISSION CHAIR BOB FITZSIMMONS, SFO

LET US BEGIN SISTERS AND BROTHERS, BECAUSE
FOR UP TO NOW, WE HAVE DONE NOTHING!

BLESSINGS ALL!

Well it's been a long journey, two and a half years, since we undertook the U.S. version of the CIOFS Formation Project. A manual of foundational formation topics has been released to the Regions, a National Formation Workshop held, and I am happy to say the Regions are pressing on to get these materials into the hands of our local formators. WOW, what an adventure!

I would like to digress a moment to give a truly shameless plug, not just for our FUN Manual, but, beyond, to ask each of you the same question brother Leo asks of brother Francis, "Why after you? Why is the whole world chasing after you?" The FUN manual that evolved over time from the CIOFS "Forming the Formators" project is aimed at helping us cultivate, intensify and embrace our identity as Franciscans, whose Order has an equal seat along with our friars and sisters at the Franciscan Table.

Hoping to cast some light on the question of Brother Leo, I highly recommend our upcoming *Quinquennial 2012* (next Summer, July 2012), the focus of which is this very same question, "Why after You?" It is our turn to define and embrace the core of our Franciscan identity and carry our Order into the next decade, insuring that our vision of a Loving Father continues to be offered in the Church. The coming "Q" will be a great opportunity to rededicate ourselves to this mighty task. See you there!

Now back to FUN, and what to write after the events of the past 2+ years.

I could do the back-ground again to show you how this project evolved from the will of our General Chapter, unfolded within our International Presidency, (Minister General) and how it was developed and presented here in the United States.

This; however, is a story we have been telling for more than two years now, and yes it has finally arrived. AND you cannot believe my joy at seeing so many Regions embracing the Project and entering into the adventure to infuse our local fraternities with the same enthusiasm at being called to be Franciscan People!

Perhaps a better use of the TAU-USA space might be to answer some of the questions Regions have been asking about this manual and its contents. Here are just a few of the issues:

**HERE IS THE FIRST MAJOR REQUEST/ISSUE:
HOW CAN WE USE THIS MATERIAL?**

From the get-go, and we re-emphasized this at the Workshop: this Manual, first and foremost, was put together to highlight the essential topics that must be emphasized in both initial and ongoing formation and to provide all our formators with a solid background. It is a chance to fall in love again with being Franciscan so we all can transmit who we are with great confidence, love and passion!

Initial, since here is where the Franciscan Person and vocation are identified and cultivated. Ongoing, so all the professed members can better understand and identify with their own Profession and also to better collaborate in the formation process of their inquirers and candidates.

The Manual can be the basis of the actual formation sessions, it can be an essential reader, it can be background for the formator, and it can be reference, support & focused reinforcement for any and all of the formation materials we currently use.

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

In other words, it can be what you need it to be to ensure that however you structure the formation process and whatever materials you choose to use, you can ensure that these topics get covered, discussed and comprehended by all in formation, before they seek profession.

I am exceedingly appreciative of the regions beginning to share ideas on suggested methods of use, sample curricula, cross-referencing of existing materials (I hope to have us discuss some of these various options at Chapter this October); the list goes on and I am grateful for your willingness to share with each other. This FUN project has very much become a community-wide adventure.

HERE IS A SECOND MAJOR ISSUE:

SUBSIDIARITY AND RESISTING CHANGE

This issue has appeared in a number of cases, in one form or another, from local fraternities wanting complete self-autonomy (one end of the spectrum) all the way to a Spiritual Assistant directing the fraternity to ignore it (the other end of the spectrum). Both ends of the spectrum are difficult and dangerous, especially since they call into account the very nature of who we are as an Order of global proportions with a charism that is lived in a local fraternity.

THIS QUESTION IS REALLY A TWO-PARTER.

SO HERE IS PART 1 —

SUBSIDIARITY

The General Chapter of the SFO (N.B.: this is our highest authority in governance in the Order) has, beginning in 2002 and again in 2008, determined Formation to be the highest priority within the Order and charged our Minister General and her Councilors to develop a more uniform formation approach for an Order of our magnitude. This authority comes from our General Constitutions and also the reality that the will of the General Chapter becomes the will of the whole Order.

If you are unsure of this, read the statement from the Conference of General Spiritual Assistants, in *Koinonia*, 2009 Vol. 1, concerning the General Chapter, quoted in part here:

“The Conclusions of all Chapters are binding for the Presidency but also, and perhaps even more, for all the Fraternities of the whole world at all levels and for each and every Secular Franciscan. Therefore, they must be the object of a continuous and attentive consideration by all. The entire Order, as a single body, has to strive in every possible way to implement them. It is, therefore, requested to do everything possible at all levels to make known, implement and verify the objectives set by the Chapters.”

Following CIOFS' charge to the Nations, we at the National Formation Commission developed a manual of TOPICS that need to be fully addressed and explored in Initial Formation. We have left the materials and methods up to our Regions, but we have indicated what is needed to help form the Franciscan Person. If you think about it, it's not that drastic to want to form a person in a way that supports their identity as a Franciscan person and to foster understanding of our place as a fully autonomous partner within the Franciscan family. We should already be used to much of this Topical material.

But lets' acknowledge that change is difficult, even if we agree it is in our best interests.

As an Order we are “growing up,” grateful for the years of guidance by the other branches of the Family (friars and sisters), but now realizing we are our own person (SFO), and we need to tailor our formation to serve our needs, accepting and expressing ourselves as a fundamental part of the Franciscan Trilogy.

It is time we begin to take ownership of our own Order and define how the Secular Franciscan infuses our Charism into both Church and society. My true hope is that we have just opened the door for our own SFO sisters and brothers to take greater responsibility for our formation and to continually update and renew our materials with the best of Franciscan Scholarship, so our Charism comes alive and radiates vibrant life for generations to come.

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

THE PART 2 QUESTION IS —

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF OUR SPIRITUAL ASSISTANTS

This issue can be more difficult, due to our great love for our religious brothers and sisters of the First, Second and Third Orders Regular. We have always, and continue to, hold them in our hearts with great love and respect- as it should be for all members of the Franciscan Trilogity.

BUT, they are part of their Order; they are not part of our Order.

The respective fraternity COUNCIL is the decision-making body of the fraternity, not the Spiritual Assistant alone. In fact, if we all review the current formation program for SAs, including “Family Connections—Handbook for Spiritual Assistance (2005),” and the current “Statutes for Spiritual Assistance (2009),” it becomes clear that the role of the Spiritual Assistant is no longer that of the Director or Master, but that of a full collaborator along with the fraternity council in animating the life of the Fraternity. We are our own entity, grateful for the gifts our SAs share with us, but they are only one component of the fraternity council charged to animate and guide the whole fraternity.

A Spiritual Assistant cannot direct us to ignore our own Minister General or the directives of our General Chapter, anymore than the local fraternity council can ignore them.

If this shows us nothing else, it points out the need for real council formation. We have all experienced that moment after election when the outgoing congratulates the incomers, turns over the books and vanishes. What a transition — we all need to do better for the sake of our sisters and brothers. Councils need to be formed so they can all help animate and guide the fraternity. Hopefully with assistance from CNSA and our Spiritual Assistants, we can collaborate to set up a better method of fraternity transitions. You might want to begin with something very simple like “Care and Feeding of Councils.” If anything, all this formation points us to developing stronger relationships in our individual lives, family lives and fraternal lives.

Together, we can do this!
Now back to the FUN.

We are not done; we are still in the process of preparing DVD’s from the Workshop, which I am told will be finished shortly. Also in process is an Index of each section of the FUN Manual to help you cross reference materials. We are still editing and re-editing the original to tweak it and clean up some of our grammatical faux-pas. CHECK our website often for corrections and updates www.nafraformation.org 

Lastly for the current National Formation Commission, we are exploring our last action as possibly recording a 20-to 25-minute overview of all the segments of the Manual and getting them down on a collection of additional DVDs for your use. We know this would greatly assist fraternities in on-going formation, but it would also help fraternities who are more geographically isolated.

On behalf of the National Formation Commission, it has been our blessing and privilege to be of service to you, and we thank you for your kindness and prayers both for us and for this Formation Project.

I must end this article with a paraphrased echo of the words of Tom Bello, SFO, our National Minister from his exhortation to the formators at the National Workshop:

**Receive this formation manual,
believe what you receive,
teach what you believe,
and live what you teach!**

If you bring these topics to your inquirers and candidates in a spirit of fraternal love, encouragement, passion and understanding with prayer and the Holy Spirit, our true formator, we can all assist in forming joy and wonder-filled Franciscan People.

Pace e bene,

Fitz



THE JOYS OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP

by
KATHLEEN WHITE, SFO
NATIONAL FORMATION COMMISSION

It was a remarkable
Spring this year for the
National Formation Commission.

Many emails, conference calls and
late nights at the computer were the
Prelude to the *Forming the Formators*
workshop May 12–15 at Our Lady of
Snows National Shrine,
Belleville, Illinois.

I had the great privilege of registering guests for the workshop; 130 attendees from every Regional Fraternity but two. Registration began at the NAFRA Chapter in October 2010 and continued through the months until May, the last registrant actually coming in as a walk-in on May 13.

National Minister Deacon Tom Bello commented that it was the largest gathering of Seculars other than of a Quinquennial, and he was proud and pleased to be a part of the event. Along with Regional Formation Directors, Regional Ministers, Regional Spiritual Assistants and local formation team members, several friars also gathered & encouraged the Seculars in this endeavor.

The day before the attendees arrived, the Formation Commission members gathered to prepare to welcome our guests and to polish presentations. There was great encouragement shown by Commission members for Commission members, and there was laughter, anticipating the FUN. All members agree that while we each played a part, along with the various authors of chapters of the FUN manual, Commission Chair Bob Fitzsimmons worked the hardest to bring this vision into the reality it is today.

Formatting the FUN manual was his life for months, and we are sure his wife, Patty is especially glad that this challenge has been met, embraced and completed. She has her husband back!

I never gave it a thought when we were handing out tasks. Yes, I would do the registration for the workshop and handle the room assignments. We each did our part, and this was mine.

But I was taken aback at the number of people, upon registration, who were so very grateful for the work done to make this event a success. I was even given little gifts by some!

What joyful and generous Franciscans! The evaluations, too, at the end of the workshop on Sunday morning, expressed much gratitude for the *servant leadership* of the National Formation Commission.

As we read through them we were so happy to have made a difference in their lives and to have shared a small part of the great task that lies ahead for all of us...forming the formators in each of our Regional and local fraternities!

For my part, I will spend the next year remembering in prayer whoever is doing the registration for the Quinquennial!

May they experience the (perfect) joy that I did in meeting and greeting each workshop participant and in the months prior to the event, in ironing out difficulties, answering questions, and simply sharing the love.

“Let up begin, for up to now we have done nothing.”

For Up to Now = FUN.

Let the games begin!



FOR UP TO NOW

WHAT'S UNDER THE HOOD?

EXPLORING THE CONTENTS OF OUR NEW FORMATION TEXT

by
JAN PARKER, SFO

THERE'S A NEW FORMATION VEHICLE IN TOWN!

The “*For Up to Now*” formation manual made its debut in front of 130 Secular Franciscans from across the country at the May 2011 National Formation Workshop in St. Louis. It was quite a hit!

Formation teams are now at work, and after a test drive or two, they will soon be showing this new manual at regional workshops hoping you will drive home your own copy. While those plans are being developed we thought you might enjoy a look “under the hood” of this new manual to see just “what’s she’s got.”

The complete title of this new manual is:

***For Up to Now /
Foundational Topics for Initial Formation***

We call it “FUN” for short. The FUN manual is an impressive 460 pages in 26 chapters, arranged in a suggested order beginning with “First Contacts” and “Orientation” right through to “Profession.” It’s all in a loose-leaf format to fit in a three-ring binder and is currently being completely indexed.

The FUN manual was written by a group of Secular Franciscans working under the guidance of the National Formation Commission, and it’s truly a major accomplishment for our Order. We hope everyone comes to appreciate its newly designed engine that, of course, runs on an environmentally friendly new fuel!

Why did we need a new formation manual? This manual was written in response to a strong and clear mandate from the 2002 General Chapter of our Order, asking us to engage ourselves to give to the Order a “strong, complete formation, rooted on identity and sense of belonging, based on the knowledge of the true nature of the Order.”

Our mission was to “find new, original and efficacious ways to give to formation the completeness and uniformity that an Order spread around the whole world deserves to accomplish the fundamental role of mature and authoritative apostolate it is called to offer in collaboration with the rest of the Franciscan Family.” The old vehicles weren’t bad—they just needed a new transmission.

Before going any further, it must be mentioned that this new manual could not have been accomplished without the great foundation provided over the years by all who contributed to formation in the SFO, especially previous members of the National Formation Commission. This new manual was built on a chassis they provided. We are grateful!

Now, back under the hood, let’s look at how the topics for those 26 chapters were chosen.

Thirteen of the chapters are based on material we received from the International Formation Commission via the “Form the Formators” manual developed as a result of the CIOFS formation project launched in 2002.

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

This material from CIOFS was translated from Italian into English and adapted to the terminology (culture) of the USA. The remaining 13 topics were chosen by the National Formation Commission in our best effort to create a complete program for initial formation. All together these topics are what we call “foundational.” They give us the uniformity and completeness that is so needed.

Authors of the various chapters were invited to participate and asked to write the material in a simple and easy to understand manner—yet be thorough enough to do justice to the intent of the material. They were reminded that the focus was “local formation,” not graduate theology.

This needed to be a family vehicle! The writers were encouraged to provide an appropriate Gospel or New Testament reading to introduce the segment; to include a writing, admonition, or prayer written by St Francis to support the material; and to point towards the study of particular articles of the Rule, General Constitution and National Statutes. They were asked to develop lesson plans, outlines, PowerPoint presentations, prayers, rituals, discussion questions, diagrams and anything else that would be helpful to a local formation team presenting the material. The 26 chapters of FUN have all of this... and more.

Let’s close the hood and step back, because you should definitely check out the front end of this little vehicle!

The front material is amazing! Along with several inspirational introductions there is a brief history of this formation project and a very detailed “owner’s manual” in two sections entitled “For the Formator” and “What is Formation.” These sections provide great “how to” and should be read thoroughly before attempting to operate the FUN vehicle.

As if this wasn’t enough, just wait! There’s more! The FUN manual has a companion “FUN” CD full of resources. You would not believe all the material that is on this CD!

There are more than 25 church documents and encyclicals, complete study editions of our Rule and Constitutions, more than a dozen lesson plans, various handouts and PowerPoint presentations for many of the chapters, guidelines for interviews, a complete Profession preparation packet with a sample invitation, a presider’s copy of the Rite, a sample program (worship aid) for the congregation and a timeline to prepare for a profession celebration.

On this CD you’ll find everything from diagrams of the “Pathway to Profession” to an illustrated lifeline of St. Francis; from an updated bibliography of resources to the Prayer of St. Francis in song; from an Assisi Pilgrimage presentation to a slideshow on “gazing.”

It’s all there!



“Yikes! Information overload!” you say. Is this manual too technical? Too full of heady information to funnel into our inquirers in order to create SFO intellectuals? By no means! Let’s not confuse “formation” with “formation materials.” Formation is not “just reading” and this manual without a formator who transmits it with passion and living faith is just a bunch of paper sheets with little value. In other words the FUN manual is a great new vehicle, but it’s worth nothing without a well-formed “driver.”

We invite you to hop in and find out for yourself. Attend your regional workshop. Talk to your formation team. Learn what formation is all about. We all need to know, because we are all agents of formation. Most importantly let’s trust our Maker and the Holy Spirit who is the first agent of formation. In the words of our National Minister, Tom Bello, “Let us pray without ceasing that this Formation Manual will help us form true, lifelong Secular Franciscans (including ourselves) as God intends, calls and brings to fruition.” Together we’ll find out this vehicle was designed for the “long haul”— it’s great for journeying! And it’s a great ride!

—Jan Parker is a member of San Damiano Fraternity in O’Fallon, MO., in the St. Clare Region. She is a member of the National Formation Commission and also serves as our National Secretary.

REFLECTIONS ON THE NATIONAL FORMATION WORKSHOP

by

PAT CROTTY PALMER, SFO

In May 2011, the Holy Spirit energized our National Formation Team to deliver a small portion of what is in store for the whole Secular Franciscan Order in conjunction with the rest of the entire Franciscan Family. It was like seeing the seedlings bursting forth through the surface of the earth after much nurturing and patience to keep them alive until the Springtime!

As I see it this new Springtime for our Secular Franciscan Order has all the earmarks of the earth budding forth with new life all around us and within us... and we as Formators are commissioned to continue to nurture and distribute the fruits of this magnificent harvest.

TRANSFORMATION

Whether or not we have been professed for any number of years or are just newly professed, the Holy Spirit has called us to reflect on just what our whole Franciscan Journey is and has been. We are called to be transformed all over again through the power of the Holy Spirit by retracing our steps in our Journey and to be rekindled with the burning desire and love for our fellow brothers and sisters in all walks of life... just as Francis did.

BAPTISM

To begin this Journey anew, let us reflect once more on how we were transformed by our Baptism. When we received the Sacrament of Baptism, we were then disposed to receive the other sacraments of Penance, Holy Eucharist, Confirmation, Matrimony, Sacrament of the Sick and Holy Orders. The power of the Holy Spirit, emanating from the Father and the Son is released in each of us when we receive any of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. Do we remember our Baptism and appreciate how essential the Sacraments are in our vocation to the Secular Franciscan Order?

PATH TO PROFESSION

Our Franciscan Journey ultimately led to our Profession of the Rule to live as Francis lived on this earth; however, we now start serious reflection on what made us realize that we were being called to live as Secular Franciscans; the reflective questions that are asked during the initial period of discernment, the times of careful and unhurried prayer, the reading of

the Gospels, dialogue with members of the Formation Team to bring this all into focus, a journey into deeper prayer and learning again how the Holy Spirit leads us to see Christ through Francis' eyes... in everyone we meet... and hopefully Christ is seen through us.

Can this time be anything but invigorating as we experience that excitement of new life awakening in the depths of our being? In this journey along the path to profession we are seeing once again the working of the Holy Spirit in our forming relationships with our fellow Brothers and Sisters in order to build a more intimate relationship with Christ to seek the Father. Here is the true family, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and all want to dwell within each one of us. I hope we can take time to tiptoe quietly through this path to profession and by the gentle guidance of the Holy Spirit come to a careful and new realization of our call.

OBLATIONS

Have we even begun to realize just how absolutely heavenly is the day we celebrate our Rite of Profession? Just picture the Sacred Liturgy when the Holy Spirit is invoked and comes down from Heaven right in our midst as the priest offers the bread and wine as a living sacrifice for us! As we profess, we offer ourselves and are consecrated to the Father. We become living oblations... the offering of our lives as gifts to be used for the good of the Church...and for each other... a lifetime commitment. This warrants a whole separate article.

(Continued on page 11)



(Continued from page 10)

RELATIONSHIP

Our Franciscan vocation, charism, spirituality are about relationships... relationships with our Franciscan brothers and sisters, which extends further to our neighbors, all flowing from our most meaningful relationship with the triune God. The Fraternity is a Community of Relationships in love. We will again recall our roles as Secular Franciscans to assist one another in living the Gospel and to evangelize all we meet... not by words... but by "being."

When we are gifted by the Holy Spirit with the true meaning and living of Fraternity then we shall all see and understand that this living gift will be carried within ourselves, and this, dear Brothers and Sisters, is quite different from just having meetings or gatherings; our gatherings only mark the rhythm of making our Franciscan Journey.

130 SFO'S SHARING JOY AND LEARNING

Gathering with 130 Brothers and Sisters from all but two of the Regions in the United States under the National Fraternity was like standing under a fountain and having all this experience, sharing and wisdom continuously fall upon one and penetrate one's whole being. That is truly what each Brother and Sister brought to the Workshop.

—Pat Palmer is the Local Formation Director for St. Teresa of Avila Fraternity in New Orleans, LA; a member of the Formation Team for St. Joan of Arc Region; and is also on the Executive Council with the Regional Fraternity.



Table of Contents

National Minister's Message.....2	THROUGH THE EYES OF FAITH: Day of Reflection, Dialogue and Prayer in Assisi Part One in a Series.....35
Letter from the National Formation Commission Chair.....4	JPIC News and Notes Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation Award.....36
The Joys of Servant Leadership...7	Elements of Franciscan Unity.....37
What's Under the Hood?.....8	Classic Franciscan: Dick McCloskey.....38
Reflections on the National Formation Workshop10	Upcoming Events.....39-40 Cruise to the Caribbean Canticle Campus Planning a Formation Workshop?
"FUN" for All Local Fraternities Energized....12	Fraternal Sharing.....41-43 Gatherings Sister Death The H2O Project Results Recognition and Congratulations Regional Election Results
CNSA News & Views..... 14	A Franciscan Reflection on the Death of Osama Bin Laden.....44
Continuing the FUN Conversation.....16	Evaluation Reviews on FUN.....45
Thoughts from an RFD: FUN Revisited18	Call for Articles, General Information and Editorial Staff.....46
Regional Fraternities Are Having FUN.....19-22	Franciscan Formation Books.....47
Workshop helps to Re-ignite Formation.....23-26	Quinquennial- Mark Your Calendars.....48
FRANCISCAN LIVING: A Vision of the Future.....27	
For Up To Now.....28	
New Book Release.....29	
LITTLE WEEDS: The World Needs Us.....30	
Calling Franciscan Young Adults.....31	
From My Corner of the World....32	
The Green Franciscan Sister.....34	

REGIONAL FORMATION WORKSHOP "FUN" FOR ALL!



PHOTOS FOR THIS ARTICLE COURTESY OF LEIGH LENTINE, SFO
ST. DAVID FRATERNITY, WASHINGTON, MI; DIVINE MERCY REGION

Local Fraternities Energized!

DIVINE MERCY REGIONAL FORMATION WORKSHOP "FUN" FOR ALL!

Excitement and anticipation were in the air as 53 members of **DIVINE MERCY REGION**, representing most of the region's 33 local fraternities, gathered at the Capuchin Retreat Center in Washington, Michigan on July 22–24, 2011, for a Regional Fraternity Workshop on Formation.

The workshop's purpose was to introduce to local fraternities the newly released national formation manual, *"For Up to Now – Foundational Topics for Initial Formation"* (affectionately called the "FUN" manual), a publication of the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order. Divine Mercy's gifted Regional Formation Team, led by their spirit-filled Formation Director, Patti Reynolds, SFO, were amazing in their planning and facilitating of this workshop that was described by attendees as "awesome", "revitalizing" and "the most informative meeting I have attended."



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The weekend's beautiful first priority was reflected in Friday evening's opening prayer service, where a breaking open of Scripture & Faith sharing was led by Deacon Richard Hulan, SFO. The Holy Spirit moved among the brothers and sisters forming a community of hearts open and ready to receive all the gifts of the workshop ahead – and by the end of the weekend there was no doubt that the Holy Spirit had graced all in attendance with the power of a Pentecost! At Sunday's closing prayer service Deacon Hulan stated that he had never before experienced such a movement of the Holy Spirit in the Order as he did in this weekend – both in the fact of the FUN Manual itself and in the workshop's formative events.

Comments throughout the weekend confirmed what he had experienced.

"This manual is so unifying and so complete! It sets a standard and will help us flourish and grow!" "This is a powerful guide! We are now 'in sync'; finally we are all on the same page." "It's so well organized and detailed." "The CD is an amazing resource." "It's fantastic that our National leadership has done this!"

Mary Herbert, professed in 1945, shared her excitement, "All we had 60 years ago was written on one sheet of paper. Now we have so much! This is wonderful". Marie Amore, a member of the Region who joined the International Formation Commission in 2004, shared how she witnessed the beginnings of this formation project nine years ago at the 2002 General Chapter of the SFO. "This is a miracle!" she exclaimed, lovingly holding up the "FUN" manual.

Throughout the weekend Patti and her team members gave insightful and passionate presentations on key topics, as well as on the use of the manual, outlining a plan for how the Region would move forward. The workshop also featured guest presenter, Jan Parker, SFO, a member of the National Formation Commission (NFC) who worked on the development of the FUN Manual for the past two years.



(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12)

Jan gave several presentations and, with her experience on the NFC, was able to answer questions and present new ideas for good formation. Her joyful songs added even more “fun” to the “FUN” weekend!



Energized by the region’s enthusiasm and fraternal spirit, Jan shared her thoughts on what she calls a “defining moment” for the Order.



“I am so appreciative of the formation efforts of so many who have gone before us and for all that has led up to this moment. I will do everything I can to help our regions introduce the manual to local fraternities because this is where it needs to be embraced.”



Jan noted that she and the other members of the NFC would greatly welcome the opportunity to help plan and facilitate regional formation workshops. “Anyone who would like us to help present a workshop should just call on us! We ask regions to cover our room and board, but our travel expenses are covered by NAFRA.”

The FUN Manual is being released within the regions after it is presented in a workshop-type gathering. “CIOFS (the International Council of the Secular Franciscan Order) asked that this new formation material be conveyed in a living transmission within a fraternity experience. It won’t work to just ‘hand out the book.’ My experience at Divine Mercy Region’s workshop convinces me of the wisdom of this approach. There is no substitute for the wonderful personal exchanges that take place when a fraternity gathers. This new formation project needs to be presented in a gathering such as this.”

The appreciation of those attending the workshop was shared in comments on the evaluation sheets.



He then gave a solemn blessing and after a rousing rendition of “They’ll Know We’re Franciscans” (by our love, by our love!) all went forth to share the good news.

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“All the presentations, especially the one on Profession were “excellent.”

“Patti, Marie (Amore) and Jan are dynamic and uplifting speakers.”

“The profession talk was excellent! It gave us the reason we are Franciscan!”

**“This weekend was terrific!
What a beautiful display of diversity of gifts!”**

Understandably, there were concerns and questions as well. Comments included:

“This will take time to read and understand. This is a big responsibility.” “We need to take this little by little — it won’t be difficult, but it needs to be a team effort.” “This is a bit overwhelming — we need to break it down.”

Others added thoughtful encouragement:

“It’s a gift of the Holy Spirit, so let’s trust it!” “Don’t be afraid — just try it. It will take practice but we’ll get it.” “It took them (CIOFS and the National Formation Commission) nine years — I can certainly invest a few hours each week to study it and internalize it.” “Regionally, we can find specialists for each topic, we can help each other. This will build fraternity across the region.” Many said this would certainly move the Order forward. Some talked about this being a watershed moment for the Order. Deacon Hulan summed it up well, saying, “This manual is a gold mine. To get the nuggets will take prayer, patience, time and openness to the Spirit.”

All present were extremely appreciative of the foresight of the Regional Council for arranging what turned out to be a premier regional workshop on “FUN”. Sheri Hafeli, Regional Minister, shared, “This new manual is the key to revitalizing and energizing our Order and a tool for rebuilding our Order. When WE realize who we are called to be it will set us on fire and others will be attracted to the Order.”

At the closing commissioning on Sunday afternoon, Deacon Hulen asked everyone to raise high their individual FUN manuals for a blessing. He challenged each Formator — exhorting them to take all they had learned to their local fraternities. “Read it and live it!” he said.



"Hold back nothing of yourselves for yourselves, that He Who gives Himself totally to you may receive you totally"
Francis of Assisi - The Saint - Vol I - Page 118

CNSA

NEWS & VIEWS

Franciscan life in the 21st Century

Lester Bach OFM Cap

UNITY and FRANCISCANS

I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

John 17: 20-23 - NRSV

Jesus is clear on what he desires. Franciscans seek to achieve Jesus' desire for unity. By profession we have made that choice. Other church groups may focus on defense of the faith or be more re-active toward people who see things differently. If that is their charism, they need to follow it.

But our Franciscan charism calls us to seek unity rather than breaking relationships. Our charism is to bring to the Church and fraternity a spirit of welcome rather than separation. Thus we communicate the message of Jesus. Our charism invites us to love **all** people even if they see things differently than we do.

When disagreements arise, we seek dialogue. When conflicts arise, we seek ways to bring people to unity - no matter how long it takes or how difficult the journey. This models our Franciscan identity in the Church and the world. We owe it to the Church and the SFO to be faithful to our Franciscan spirit.

Prompted by the love that comes from God, they (laity) do good to everyone, especially to their brothers and sisters in the faith (cf. Gal 6:10), putting aside "all ill will and deceit, all hypocrisy, envy and slander" (1 Pet 2:1), in this way attracting people to Christ. Divine love, "poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given us" (Rom 5:5), enables lay people to express concretely in their lives the spirit of the Beatitudes.

... Similarly, lay people who have followed their particular vocation and become members of any of the associations or institutions approved by the Church, aim sincerely at making their own the forms of spirituality proper to these bodies.

*Apostolicam Actuositatem - Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People
 Vatican II - Paragraph 4*

Those also have a claim on our respect and charity who think and act differently from us in social, political, and

religious matters. In fact, the more deeply, through courtesy and love, we come to understand their way of thinking, the more easily will we be able to enter into dialogue with them.

*Gaudium et Spes - The Church in the Modern World
 Vatican II - Paragraph 28*

Building a just social and civil order wherein each person receives what is his or her due, is an essential task which every generation must take up anew ... She (the Church) cannot and must not replace the State. Yet at the same time she cannot and must not remain on the sidelines in the fight for justice.

God is Love - Benedict XVI - Paragraph 28a

The Spirit is ... the energy which transforms the heart of the ecclesial community, so that it becomes a witness before the world to the love of the Father, who wishes to make humanity a single family in his Son.

God is Love - Benedict XVI - Paragraph 19

Consequently, in addition to their necessary professional training, ... charity-workers need a "formation of the heart;" they need to be led to that encounter with God in Christ which awakens their love and opens their spirits to others.

God is Love - Benedict XVI - Paragraph 31a



The Church consistently calls us to show a love that reflects the *community of love*. For Franciscans to do otherwise would miss the goal of our Franciscan and christian life. We cannot develop unity by separating from others who disagree with us. Instead, we find ways to understand them and open the way to dialogue. Thus, Francis' words are applicable:

In fact, many who seem to us to be members of the devil will yet be disciples of Christ.

*Legend of the Three Companions
 Francis of Assisi - The Founder - Vol II - Page 102*

These truths about unity and communion in the Church call us to become a source of unity for all people.

U.S. Catholic Catechism for Adults - USCCB - Page 123

The human being needs unconditional love. He needs the certainty which makes him say: "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom 8:38-39)

Saved in Hope - Benedict XVI - Paragraph 26

Our Franciscan Family seeks unity in our Church; we seek unity and civility in political discussions (by respecting one another); we seek unity within the Franciscan Family by respectful communication that leads to understanding. We engage in dialogue rather than debate; in disagreements we seek to understand the "other's" position. We remain friends, treating one another with dignity and respect - maintaining a "Trinitarian" relationship of love.

The opposite attitudes - avoiding one another; avoiding dialogue; avoiding communication; avoiding loving interaction - these are attitudes that should not find a home in the life of a FRANCISCAN!



Faithfulness to the SFO Rule (given to us by the Church), calls us to model the charism of St. Francis. We are called to *re-build the Church*; we are called to personal conversion (SFO Rule #7); we are called to engage in *self-giving* and earnest prayer as did Mary (#9); we are called to *let prayer and contemplation be the soul of all they (we) are and do* (#8); we are called to develop a *gentle and courteous spirit and accept all people as a gift of the Lord* (#13); we are called to *build a more fraternal and evangelical world* (#14); we are called to be *in the forefront in promoting justice* (#15); we are called to *seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue* (#19); *led by the Spirit, (we) strive for perfect charity in their (our) own secular state* (#2); we make *Christ the inspiration and the center of his (our) life with God and people* (#4); *devote themselves to living in full communion with the pope, bishops, and priests, fostering an open and trusting dialogue of apostolic effectiveness and creativity* (#6).

We avoid whatever would separate us from others. *Separation does not find support in the SFO Rule.* We seek unity, not separation; we seek reconciliation, not angry division; we seek a listening spirit rather than arrogance or rigid stubbornness. In short, we are faithful to the SFO Rule given us by the Church. Read the Rule regularly - an article-a-day - so that we are able to show, in life, faithfulness to the Franciscan spirit we embraced at profession.

We are called to be open to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. We humbly realize that our way of perceiving things is not the only way to see things. Personal opinions are simply that - opinions! The challenge to change is called *conversion* in the Rule (Rule #7). It is our common heritage that finds expression in the quality of our love! The Holy Spirit gives us the power to implement the SFO Rule. The actions and attitudes of "others" DO NOT determine how we choose to act! The SFO Rule guides our actions!

The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: "Come, go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words." So I went down to the potter's house, and there he was working at his wheel. The vessel he was making of clay spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as seemed good to him.



Then the word of the Lord came to me: "Can I not do with you, O house of Israel, just as this potter has done?" says the Lord. "Just like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel."

Jeremiah 18:1-5

We are surrounded by calls for unity. Eucharistic prayers at Mass remind us of the call for unity.

May all of us who share in the body and blood of Christ be brought together in unity by the Holy Spirit.

Eucharistic prayer #2

... In mercy and love unite all your children wherever they may be.

Eucharistic prayer #3

... gather all who share this one bread and one cup into the one body of Christ, a living sacrifice of praise.

Eucharistic prayer #4

Dialogue is a form of evangelization. It is a way of making Christ and his Gospel known to others, while at the same time respecting their freedom of conscience and adherence to their own religious tradition. The Church has received from Christ the mandate to make him known to all people. She does this in many ways. Dialogue is one way, but another way is the missionary activity of the Church.

United States Catholic Catechism for Adults - USCCB - Page 131

God calls lay people to witness and share their faith in the midst of the world. By their Baptism they share in Christ's priesthood and are sealed by the Spirit. They are thus called to holiness, to a prophetic witness in the world, and to a kingly resolve to sanctify the world by their words and deeds.

United States Catholic Catechism for Adults USCCB - Page 138



If we cause division or create walls between people, we fail as Franciscan evangelists (which the Church calls us to be). The example of St. Francis, in his dialogue with the Sultan, proclaims "our way" of dealing with people who may seem like an "enemy." Even when we disagree, we retain a friendly relationship.

Be wise in your dealings with outsiders, but use your opportunities to the full. Let your words always be gracious, never insipid; learn how best to respond to each person you meet.

Colossians 4:5-6



Brazil is the site for the SFO General Chapter - October 22-29, 2011. The theme is Evangelization. *Those who have come into genuine contact with Christ cannot keep him for themselves, they must proclaim him!*

Anne Mulqueen SFO, represents the USA. Remember in your prayers the chapter and its *evangelization* goals.

FOR UP OF NOW

TO: Regional Ministers, Regional Formation Directors, NEC and NFC
July 13, 2011

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This model curriculum presented to us by our brother Patrick is wonderful! As our sister Kathleen said, "What a gift to the Order!" I appreciate the work of Patrick and all the others who are moving forward with the implementation of the FUN Manual. Thanks for your time, energy and commitment.

Looking at this model curriculum brought to mind a few thoughts I'd like to share about the formation process and to request further ideas on how to move forward in these areas. In particular I want to comment on the use of other formation texts to supplement the foundational topics covered in the FUN manual. I'll start with some thoughts on Scripture and Prayer, move on to "Forming the Formators" and then conclude with the use of other resources, including other formation texts.

SCRIPTURE AND PRAYER IN FORMATION

"For Up to Now" makes the case that "all along the way" we need to direct those in formation to prayer, the reading of Scripture, to shared prayer experiences and the sharing of Scripture. Although in some respects this "goes without saying", it's also important to "say it".

So how do we keep Scripture and Prayer "front and center"? Maybe it doesn't make sense to list these as "curriculum topics" because Prayer and Scripture aren't really "topics". They need to become a daily part of the life of an SFO. I'm not sure how to keep them in the forefront except to keep them in the forefront! I did note that this model curriculum included sections on prayer and Lectio Divina, etc., as topics to cover, but the challenge for us is to help others form a prayer life and love of Scripture that undergirds the "learning" about it. What would be your ideas on how to do this?

FORMING THE FORMATORS

My next thought has to do with formation being "more than just a curriculum". It concerns "forming the formators". How familiar are we with Article 19.5 of our National Statutes? This article states, in part: "The form to be employed in both initial and ongoing formation is that found in the *Guidelines of Initial Formation*. (Const. # 38.2)". Our FUN Manual also stresses the importance of Guidelines for Initial Formation (GFIF) and is in fact "built on it". FUN builds on GFIF in the chapters "For the Formator" and "What is Formation" and constantly references GFIF as foundational.

Knowing that our National Statutes mandate the use of Guidelines for Initial Formation we must ask ourselves how familiar are we with this book? Obviously, it is an essential document, and yet how underutilized it is and relatively unknown by many! GFIF is all about "forming the formators". It's great to develop a curriculum to implement the FUN manual, and I mean that sincerely, but that is only part of the task before us. "Forming the formators" is also part of our task.

When CIOFS presented to us the new formation project "forming the formators" was their top priority. CIOFS very strongly stressed that formation in the order was not to be a "course" but required a "lived experience"—a "lived transmission". Those involved in Formation (and that's all of us!) need to learn this art. For CIOFS as well as for the National Formation Commission this remains a major concern. CIOFS did not wish this formation project to be a "course" in Franciscan studies. Their reasons for a "living transmission" were compelling. This is, in part, why we were directed to distribute the FUN Manual only to those who attend a formation workshop gathering.

All that being said how can we "form the formators" utilizing the good and basic principles outlined in GFIF and the FUN Manual? I believe that reading and studying GFIF is part of our task. Each time I read it I am reminded of all that formation needs to be, but I don't read it as often as I should.

How do we encourage this? How do we encourage formators to also read and study the "front material" in FUN? Please ponder this and share your ideas.

(Continued on page 17)

(Continued from page 16)

In this light of “forming the formators” our FUN Manual also stresses the need to be familiar with the job description of a Formation Director. This job description is found in the “Handbook for Regional Formation Directors”. An occasional review of this resource will help us become effective formators. Need a copy? You can find it at:

www.nafraformation.org/HBforRegionalFormatorsFINAL.pdf

Once again to state the obvious, our efforts to improve formation need to go beyond just presenting material to be covered. We cannot forget the “doing and the being” and focus only on the “knowing”. The material and topics to be presented are only part of the formation process. It is critical that we don’t just focus on the “foundational topics” in this new formation project, but that we “form the formators” as well. Knowing what formation is all about is important. How do we teach this? Please share your ideas.

THE USE OF RESOURCES AND OTHER FORMATION TEXTS:

Looking at this model curriculum I am happy to see the column with the heading “Other” which references our “essential documents” (Rule, Constitutions, Ritual, etc.) and various church encyclicals and documents. These are important supplemental resources. Thank you for making these connections for us all!

There may be some variations from region to region as to what “other” material is presented, but we all gain by sharing our ideas. Patrick has offered some great thoughts as to what to include.

Steve may soon present more –Let’s keep sharing our ideas.

When it comes to the use of formation texts other than For Up to Now we need to be a bit careful. Making use of other formation texts has advantages, none the least being what we gain by the insights of other authors, but For Up to Now was mandated for a reason. A formator cannot simply look at the FUN list of chapters and say “Oh, we need to cover this topic” and then find that topic in another place to the exclusion of knowing what FUN has to say about that topic. To put it another way: The topics covered in the FUN manual were written in a new light. Other formation texts might cover these topics, but might not include the emphasis that CIOFS feels has been missing prior to this formation project.

To ensure that we truly are “covering the material” each topic in the FUN manual needs to be read and comprehended by the formation team. It is then the work of the formation team to present this material to those in formation. This can be done in one of several ways, but always with sensitivity to the one being formed.

One option is to hand out the FUN chapters to be read ahead of time and then to come together to discuss the material. If you feel that the chapter will not be read, for whatever reason (even after handing it out) it is important to glean the main points and share and discuss them. Presenting supporting material is always good. Using other formation texts is also an option if those texts cover not only the topic, but also the emphasis given to that topic in the FUN manual.

Many topics covered in the FUN manual are presented in new and unique ways. We need to evaluate older formation texts and ask if they will help or hinder. Let us bring out from our storehouses that which is both “old and new”, but let us also be aware that new wine needs new wineskins.

Perhaps a summary of what I’m trying to say is this: As we implement FUN, I think it’s great to suggest other supporting material that “brings home” the topic. Even better is to further “bring it home” through sharing (talking) about it. To further “bring it home” through a shared prayer experience is heavenly. The icing on the cake is when you teach it by living it day in and day out in your own life, knowing full well the only way this happens is by the graces gained through daily prayer and the sacraments. The goal and the prize is when we see these ideals embraced and lived out in the lives of those going through the formation process. Our efforts and a continued sharing of how to make this happen are much needed!

That being said, I just thank you again for your work and all the sharing that has happened so far. The energy from our May 2011 workshop obviously continues. FUN has had a great reception and I can’t wait to see where we go from here!

Peace and love,

Jan

Jan Parker, SFO, our National Secretary, also serves as a member of the National Formation Commission.

THOUGHTS FROM AN RFD: FUN REVISITED

by

B.J. CHRISTENSEN, SFO
REGIONAL FORMATION DIRECTOR
TROUBADOURS OF PEACE REGION

As a student at Sacred Heart School in Lombard, Illinois, I read dozens of stories about saints. Our little “readers” took us into the lives of two little Catholic children, David and Anne, their parents, friends and pets; the Catholic version of the secular “Dick and Jane” books. Of the dozens of stories about saints I read as a student at Sacred Heart, only one remains in my memory. I even remember the title of the story: “Saint Francis and the Wolf.” Why did that particular story remain and the others not?

Now that I am a Secular Franciscan, I see more clearly Francis’ influence in my life through the years in ways I didn’t even notice as I was living those moments. I have felt drawn to St. Francis since I sat in Sr. Mynette’s second grade classroom those many years ago. Sr. Mynette and the other sisters at Sacred Heart were “School Sisters of St. Francis.” I didn’t even know they were Franciscan until recently.

At the time I only knew I was loved by them, and the feeling of acceptance I received from them was something I want to spread to those whose lives I touch and whose paths cross mine.

I want my life to have a palpable presence of Francis, just as my mentors had, and so in 2003 I was professed and began my new life as a Secular Franciscan.

This past May, I went back to my Illinois roots to attend the *National Formation Commission “Forming the Formators” Workshop* in Belleville, Illinois. I felt the characteristic Franciscan warmth immediately as I stepped into the Our Lady of the Snows Shrine Hotel and Complex and began meeting the other participants of the workshop.

The weekend began on Thursday evening with dinner, as participants reconnected with friends or added new ones to their collection.

Bob Fitzsimmons, SFO, the Formation Commission Chair, began the meeting with introductions of his team, the National Formation Commission: Jan Parker, SFO; Kathleen White, SFO; Rena Xuerub, SFO; and Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM.

Fr. Richard opened the session with prayer. The theme of the weekend and the title of the new formation manual are, “*Let us begin FOR UP TO NOW we have done nothing.*”

Bob (Fitz) Fitzsimmons, in his talk about Franciscan Theology/Spirituality, reminded us that we need to “see Jesus in each member” and “if your fraternity isn’t growing, see if it is loving.”

In speaking on Profession, Fr. Richard called us to get rid of the phrase, “We are in the world, but not of the world.” In his article in the “**FUN**” manual he stated, “The Order has not made you secular...you were BORN secular. It will be the duty of the Professed to seek out and find the ‘theological dimensions’ to that secularity.... Since our desire is to get to heaven, it stands to reason that the way to get there will be through what is familiar to us here on earth – other people, friends, our daily routine, the illnesses we bear, etc. Find your dimension in your secular condition.”

The “**FUN**” manual insures that no fraternity will settle for second best in their formation programs and that proper preparation is made on a uniform basis. Jan Parker, SFO, stressed to the workshop participants that the formators need to present the information in the manual with “passion” and “living faith.”

She emphasized the importance of not simply using words to express our faith; rather, our faith and Franciscan charism must be who we are and how we behave. We *should* be noticeably different.

(Continued on page 19)

(Continued from page 18)

The adage, “actions speak louder than words,” was implied several times during the weekend by the speakers including Fr. Richard, who stated, “there is power in how we behave, how we communicate Christ to others,” and that is a facet of Franciscan formation that isn’t accomplished with lectures and study.

The answer to Brother Maseo’s question “Why you, Francis?” is that Francis lived his faith with incredible passion; that’s what drew people to him, and we need to follow his lead in *doing what is ours to do with passion*.

The benefit of the new manual for the local fraternities is immense, in that all future Secular Franciscans throughout the United States and the world will experience the same elements that are necessary to understand their vocation to the Secular Franciscan Order.

There will no longer be the problem of local formators having to search for appropriate books and material for the formation of our future sisters and brothers. Everything they will need is in the manual. It allows each fraternity to structure its own programs, depending upon the needs of the people they have in formation and helps true vocations to the Franciscan Family flourish.

The fundamental goal of formators is to lovingly help candidates in their spiritual growth and deepen their understanding of the significance of the choice they are contemplating while allowing those who don’t have a vocation to the SFO find their own spiritual expression.

What the NFC stressed at the workshop was that the wheel has not been reinvented. The “new” formation is actually an enhanced version of “The Guidelines for Initial Formation.” The intention in instituting a new manual was to make sure that the quality of local formation, both spiritual and doctrinal, is raised to a higher level for all fraternities globally and that everyone is doing the same thing.

The manual truly is a labor of love. We are grateful to the members of the National Formation Commission for the many hours of work and sacrifice that they put into the manual to make our efforts as formators easier.

The National Formation Commission “Forming the Formators” workshop in Belleville proved that the legacy of Francis is alive and well in Belleville and throughout the USA through the love, sacrifices and hard work of many dedicated Franciscans.

With gratitude and respect, we thank all who put their time, love and effort into “*For Up to Now*.”

Sister Mynette would be proud.

FOR UP _{to} NOW

REGIONAL FRATERNITIES ARE HAVING FUN

(Continued on page 20)

BLESSED KATERI TEKAKWITHA REGIONAL FRATERNITY

Our Regional Formation Team is planning a Formation Workshop scheduled for Friday through Sunday morning on October 14–16, 2011, at Christ the King Retreat House in Syracuse, New York. The workshop is designed for Formation Directors, their Formation Team members, Regional Council Members and Spiritual Assistants.

We have eight members on the Regional Formation Team including Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM. We each will have a part in the workshop. The purpose is to share the FUN Manual. We plan to explain and demonstrate the use of the manual and the CD resources. We plan to demonstrate lessons, one for each of the levels of Initial Formation. There will be follow up SFO Days in each of the three areas of the region.

THANK YOU, MARY FRANCES CHARSKY, SFO

REGIONAL FRATERNITIES ARE HAVING FUN

(Continued on page 21)

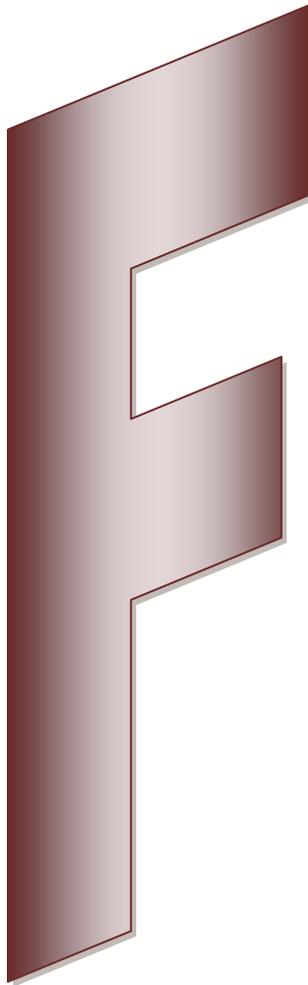
HOLY TRINITY REGIONAL

FRATERNITY will have planning meetings with the Regional Formation Team, and do planning on how to present the FUN Formation Manual. We plan to use different presentation styles. The FUN Formation Manual was briefly introduced at Regional Spring Chapter/Full Council Gathering on June 11. In the Fall or early Spring, we plan to start a series of three full-day workshops, in the three areas of Holy Trinity Region: North, Central and South.

We have a Regional *Yahoo* group that we can use for feedback, to share updates, successes and difficulties in implementing the FUN Formation Manual, etc.

We have Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM, coming in March, for our Annual Regional Retreat. We have asked him to talk about profession being a process, throughout our lifelong journey of transFOrmation, as a Secular Franciscan.

PACE E BENE, STEVE WHITE, SFO



ST. FRANCIS REGIONAL FRATERNITY

I have appointed three working groups to work on 3 presentations, decided upon by our Regional Council. They are:

1st: The two articles on vocations, charism, mission, etc.

2nd: For the Formator and What is Formation?

3rd: Basic Catholic Doctrine and Elements of Ecclesiology and Theology of the Laity.

The working groups include all the members of the REC plus selected members of our current Lay Spiritual Assistant/Formator class. They will spend the afternoon of the next LSA/F class (mid-July) meeting working on these, as well as part of the next REC meeting (1st of August). The three sessions will be presented to the August class, and fine-tuned after that. Hopefully we'll be ready for workshops in September/October. We're giving eight: One for each of our five geographic districts and one for each of our three language groups.

The participants at the workshops will be, for each district: each council, each formation director and team, and each spiritual assistant. Once we have this done, we will go on to the next part of the FUN Manual. **PEACE! SYLVIA PAOLI, SFO**

JUAN DE PADILLA REGIONAL FRATERNITY

We have divided our region into three areas: Oklahoma (6 fraternities), western Kansas (3 fraternities), and eastern Kansas (7 fraternities).

Kenton Miller (the formation director), Alice Crews (regional minister), and some members who attended the workshop in Belleville are meeting with each of these three areas. We have made attendance mandatory for the local minister, formation director and spiritual assistant and strongly encourage any other member to attend. Each fraternity minister is receiving the FUN manual purchased in Belleville, along with a CD containing the PDF file of the manual to allow for mass printing. Each area's session has been set for a Saturday and for six hours. An overview is given by Kenton Miller and then presentations similar to those given in Belleville are given by those who attended in Belleville, allowing for frequent discussions and questions. Each one brings a sack lunch. To date (June 22), we have had two sessions (eastern Kansas and Oklahoma), and the reception has been overwhelming. Everyone is very excited about this, and all seem eager to get started using it. In fact, several fraternities have already found bargains in getting the copies made so each fraternity council member has a copy. After the sessions are complete, Kenton and Alice plan to follow up with each fraternity from time to time and especially at visitations. We are stressing that we don't HAVE to use this manual as is, but it is STRONGLY recommended since using another book will require the local council to ensure that all items in the manual have been covered.

PEACE AND BLESSINGS, ALICE CREWS, SFO

REGIONAL FRATERNITIES ARE HAVING FUN

(Continued on page 22)

ST. MAXIMILIAN KOLBE REGIONAL FRATERNITY

We have divided
the manual into
10 sessions.

First, the REC will learn
in these sessions and
then the fraternity's minister,
formation director and spiritual
assistant. We have divided our
region into clusters and so the
formation director and the REC
cluster person will handle the
fraternities in each cluster.

We plan to have some sort of
certification at the end. This will
give them some incentive to
continue the course. We also
are going to have a workshop
on how adults learn. I pray
that we can accomplish
this in good time.

JOANNE ANGELETTI, SFO

ST. THOMAS MORE REGIONAL FRATERNITY

Our REC is meeting June 4 to
share the experiences of our recent
NAFRA Forming the Formators
Workshop. The three who attended
the NAFRA workshop along with our
Regional FD will plan the July Region
Formation Workshop that includes local
fraternity Ministers, Spiritual Assistants
and Formation Directors. Rough plans are
to provide the manuals to each of our local
FDs with an overview for all. We will focus
on only 2 of the 4 topics which were given
at the NAFRA workshop — The Vocation
Mission Charism and Profession. We plan
to be available to local fraternities if they
want us to repeat our workshop with
their local fraternity council and/or
formation team. As we move forward
we will firm our plans and will keep
in touch. **PEACE AND JOY,**

SUSAN SIMEONE, SFO

BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS REGIONAL FRATERNITY

We will articulate our plan during our Annual Regional
Gathering (July 22–24) and give a little “teaser”
that this wonderful new tool is coming (via a
presentation by our Regional SA). This gathering
is attended by approximately 250 of our
members, including all of our 32 ministers/
leaders in the Region so the word will be out
there. Our plan is as follows: September 10,
2011, we will have a workshop for all REC
members and all SFO certified Spiritual
Assistants. The workshop will be led by the
three of us who attended the national workshop
in Belleville, plus our Regional SA, Fr. Linus
DeSantis, OFM Conv. From this workshop, we will
develop teams to go out to the three areas of our
Region in 2012 and present the material to the
Ministers/leaders and the formation directors/teams.
Only by attending a workshop will they physically receive
the material. We have used this area concept for several
years and have great response and attendance by all
fraternities in the Region so we should get this out
to everyone to integrate into their initial formation by
mid-year 2012. **PEACE AND ALL GOOD, JERRY**

St. Elizabeth of Hungary Regional Fraternity

Our first meeting is the end of the month for all
REC members as well as the Regional Formation
team. This will be led by the three members who
attended the National Workshop. Then we hope to
develop teams to go out to the districts and present
to the ministers and formation directors/teams.
I liked the idea of not giving them the material
unless they attend a workshop. Then we plan to have
a Formation Weekend in the late Fall — November to
pull it all together. Again, this will be for ministers
and formation people from the whole region.

JACKIE WALSH, SFO

OUR LADY OF INDIANA REGIONAL

FRATERNITY is having a planning session July 15
prior to our FUN workshop September 10. It will
be challenging to present FUN topics to the local
formation teams. We have been preparing our local
formation directors for this for the past two years at
previous annual formation gatherings. The emphasis
has been and will remain on Forming the Formators
so they are prepared to form the candidates.

REGIONAL FRATERNITIES ARE HAVING FUN

FIVE FRANCISCAN MARTYRS REGIONAL FRATERNITY

What we are doing is a twofold approach to establishing Formation Workshops in the future.

We are taking two steps:

1. Distribution of a limited amount of material to all local Fraternity Formation Directors with a request to make copies and distribute copies to all professed members. That material consists of: "For the Formators" article from the FUN Manual and Fr. Felice Cangelosi, OFM Cap. Keynote Address in 2008, "Profession in the SFO: Gift and Commitment." The objective is to generate local interest and obtain reactions, positive or negative, before finalizing the workshop programs.

2. A review of the same material plus some history and lesson plan formats and several questions for consideration by REC members before the next REC meeting in July. The questions focus on what the workshop deliverables should look like, media formats, training approaches and distribution options.

The purpose here is to get a consensus on what we will do to deliver the FUN Manual in the Region. This way we should have some local and REC input as we begin to address the how and what ways at the July meeting. The local input is critical because of the size of resources and skill levels in the small versus large fraternities. We need an approach or approaches that will cover all of our Fraternities.

PAX, HANS

Divine Mercy Regional Fraternity

Our FUN Regional workshop is scheduled for July 22–24, 2011 and Jan Parker is our guest! We are "duplicating" the National FUN workshop held in May in Belleville, Illinois. Our Regional Formation Team and Jan will be leading each workshop. The workshop is being

held at a retreat center; there will be opportunity for free time, sharing, Mass, chapel time, and a craft (teambuilding) for a prayer space symbol that will travel to each formation opportunity and which can be built upon at future FUN workshops. Our Brothers & Sisters who are registered for the 2011 July FUN will be invited to be a part of the Regional FUN Formation Team to help lead future workshops for the region, i.e. FUN II and FUN III. This will be a beneficial and empowering leadership opportunity especially if our region votes to implement "districtization" in August, 2011 and will insure that the FUN Manual will be continually passed on to our Members to implement.

PATTI REYNOLDS, SFO

Mother Cabrini Regional Fraternity

Our Regional Formation Commission will be meeting on July 9 to lay out our plans for our weekend Formation Workshop to be held September 17–18. This workshop has been publicized repeatedly to our fraternities already, so that local ministers, formation directors, and as many others (especially spiritual assistants) as possible will put it on their calendars and attend. (We have made it clear, when asked, that having a fraternity meeting one of those days does NOT excuse ministers/formation directors from attending – their fraternities will appreciate them all the more when they've had to manage without them for a month!) One of the preliminary tasks that our formation director and one of the commission members have already undertaken is indexing the topics in the FUN manual in Fr. Lester's most recent formation book. Since the FUN manual is *not* a book for those in formation and many of our fraternities already use Fr. Lester's books, we think that will provide a good path for fraternities to get into the material. We'll know more in a couple of weeks.

VICKIE KLICK

TAU CROSS REGIONAL FRATERNITY

At our June 4 Regional Executive Council Meeting, we discussed how to effectively present the material to our local Fraternity Formation Directors and Ministers. It was decided that workshops would be conducted at three convenient locations (Bronx, Queens and Nassau/Suffolk) beginning in the fall. Contact was made with the Minister/Administrator/Business Manager of three Churches—Immaculate Conception (Bronx), Holy Family in Flushing (Queens) and St. Elizabeth in Huntington (Nassau/Suffolk). The dates of the workshops are Sept. 10, Nov. 19 and Dec. 10. On July 18, the Regional Formation Team will meet to plan the workshops. An informational flyer with registration will be sent to Ministers and Formation Directors. We have also inquired locally about the copying of the manual. It is most probable that we will have it copied through the printer that does our Regional Newsletter. My *Minister's Message* in the July 2011 (Quarterly) *Tau Cross Newsletter*, reports on the "Forming the Formators" Workshop, Belleville, IL.

JOAN GEIGER, SFO

Workshop helps to re-ignite Formation

By BOB & MARY STRONACH, SFO

The National Formation Commission unveiled a Formation Manual in May to guide formation teams in conducting initial formation for inquirers and candidates. Some 130 Secular Franciscans and spiritual assistants representing 29 of 30 regions took part in the “Forming the Formators” workshop, held May 12-15 at the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville, IL. With many regions sending several members of their formation teams, Formation Chair Bob Fitzsimmons was delighted at the turnout, especially since, as Minister General Encarnacion del Pozo put it, formation remains the number one priority for the entire order.



Like Franciscans around the globe, a pole proclaims a multi-tongue message of peace at the site of “Forming the Formators” Workshop.

WORKSHOP CANDIDS



Crystal Holley, SFO



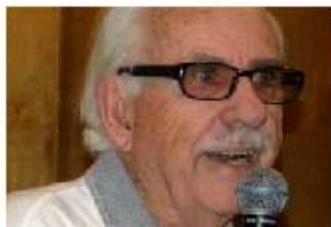
Clare McCluggage, SFO



Imelda Aguilar, SFO



Robert Murray, SFO



Rock DeSpain, SFO



Sue Nelson, SFO



Bob Fitzsimmons, SFO, charged attendees to return to their regions to replicate the workshop training and introduce the manual to local fraternities.

Fitzsimmons referred to it as the “FUN” manual, an acronym for part of the title, “*For Up to Now: Foundational Topics for Initial Formation.*” The words, *For Up to Now*, come from a charge by Francis of Assisi: “Let us begin, *for up to now* we have done nothing.”

The new manual doesn’t mean formation teams need to replace the formation books they are using, he said. It does mean they need to make sure that key subject areas outlined in the new manual are covered.

“You need to read it, you

need to study it, you need to pray with it,” Fitzsimmons told attendees in charging them to return to their regions and replicate the introductory training for local formation directors and their teams.

The Formation Commission took new material and guidelines developed by the International Fraternity (CIOFS), and added its own material, drawing on the rich development of formation resources in the United States. Among other things, the new manual promotes a deeper understanding of the Catholic faith, development

and charism of the Franciscan movement, and Catholic and Franciscan theology. It also makes clear that membership in the Secular Franciscan Order is a true vocation – a calling from God – and that initial formation leads candidates to the life-changing act of profession, with an understanding of the profound commitment to God’s kingdom. Simply put, noted Formation Commission Spiritual Assistant Richard Trezza, OFM, the church and Franciscan family recognize profession in the Secular Franciscan Order as having



The National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows spreads over 200 acres. Among its features are a shrine church, conference center, hotel (shown here across the street from the conference center), a Children’s Memorial Playground, numerous devotional sites, and the main shrine amphitheatre for large crowds.



Jan Parker, SFO



Kathleen White, SFO



Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM

the same significance as religious profession – different, but of equal import.

After all, Fitzsimmons said, formation is about “changing the heart during the journey.”

Formation Commission Member Jan Parker called the release of the FUN manual “an exciting time” because “we are experiencing an awakening... with a new responsibility.” She listed the “agents of formation” as the Holy Spirit, the candidates, the whole fraternity, the formation team and the spiritual assistant. “Formation is never the work of the formation

director alone.” She emphasized: If you are truly living the Secular Franciscan vocation, you not only can teach it, but candidates can see it.

Discerning a vocation occurs while the fraternity gets to know the individual and the individual gets to know the fraternity. “The importance of discernment cannot be overemphasized, for the good of the fraternity and for the good of the individual,” Parker said.

In simple terms, “we have come to Francis because we have fallen in love,” she said. The task is to stay in love, to

keep the passion, no matter how tough it gets. “A Franciscan without passion had better leave.”

Formation Commission member Kathleen White said something similar: “If we’re not committed, then it’s not a vocation.” And it’s a commitment that sees others above self. “If all of us said, ‘not me, but you’, all of us would be living a life of Francis.”

Through reading and taking to heart the Gospel, Francis fell in love with Christ, and, she said, his love for Christ is what made Francis recognize everyone and everything as

his brother and sister. With a mission to rebuild the church, Francis understood the Gospel was to be lived.

White also noted that with a Secular Franciscan vocation being a call from God, formation and life in fraternity “call forth gifts,” or charisms, “from within ourselves and from others.” She urged: “Don’t leave gifts unwrapped,” or unused.

Parker pointed to resources in the manual and an accompanying CD that will help fraternities prepare for the rite of profession. It needs to be planned, with care, to portray its profound significance.

During profession, the minister calls on the Holy Spirit, noted Fr. Richard Trezza.

“It’s a big deal.”

He elaborated: “We need to understand from the get-go that a vocation to the Secular Franciscan Order is a gift... and that it is driven by the Spirit... We progress through this gift and a moment comes when you make profession... It allows you to profess your love for the Beloved in a public way,” dedicating yourself to service of God’s kingdom.



Huge hands hold up a climbing rock at the Children's Memorial Playground at the shrine. Similarly, the Holy Spirit supports Secular Franciscans in their vocations. Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM, puts it this way: The commitment to God's service is so significant when Secular Franciscans make their profession that they could only do it through an outpouring of grace from God.

WORKSHOP CANDIDS



Tuan Anh Cao, SFO



Susan Simeone, SFO



Steve White, SFO



Theresa Witto, SFO



Joanne Anderson-Castillo, SFO



Rena Xuereb, SFO
Commission Member



Bl. Kateri Tekakwitha Regional Minister Mary Frances Charsky, SFO, center, with two of her formation team members, Joanne Lockwood, SFO, and Katie Koscinski, SFO. She called the workshop “a joyful opportunity to revitalize our formation process” and said: “We have been re-ignited with the burning love of God and our neighbor.”



Alice Crews, SFO



Joanne Angeletti, SFO,
and Linda Monitello, SFO



Dave Dieringer, SFO

Art and Poetry of Franciscan Formation

Rita Baughman, SFO, a local formation director in St. Clare Region, spent time in meditation at the Children’s Memorial Playground during a break in the workshop. She was gazing on a scene from the life of Francis (an original illustration of Francis and the San Damiano Cross), seeking inspiration for a poem.

It’s part of an on-going formation project that she and graphic illustrator Howard Schroeder are doing for their St. Francis of Assisi Frater-

nity in St. Louis, Missouri.

“The fraternity is putting together a binder of stories and art on Francis,” she said.

Schroeder is creating 12 scenes, based on his interpretation of Francis sculptures that a deceased Secular Franciscan had created. Once he completes an illustration, he composes an essay on what it means to him; and then Baughman takes the illustration and pens a poem. For example, for a scene depicting the story of the wolf of Gubbio, she wrote a poem

from the wolf’s point of view called “Hunger.” Her goal is simple: “The only reason for my poetry is to get people inspired.”

As a section is finished, it is copied and passed out to fraternity members for discussion as an on-going formation exercise.

“We’ve completed three of the 12 sections,” she said, adding: “Once all the sections are done, we’re thinking about getting it copyrighted and making it available.”

Rita Baughman, SFO, a poet with formation in mind.



A VISION OF THE FUTURE

by
FRANCINE GIKOW, SFO
FEATURE EDITOR

I have a vision of the future for the Secular Franciscan Order. A vision of the SFO coming into its own. A vision of our Order, like Pope Innocent III's, of Francis propping up the church to prevent it from falling down. A vision of a dynamic, spirit-filled Order, calling out to a broken Church, a message of love and conversion – a message filled with hope and commitment.

This vision of our future Order must define who we are and who we are about to become. I am convinced that with the recent scandals and clergy sexual abuse of minors, the Secular Franciscan Order's brothers and sisters can stand as witnesses to their fellow lay people about what the Church is really about...Christ's love, forgiveness and salvation! This lay witness is even more crucial with the declining numbers of religious and clergy who had been the visible face of the Church for so long. We can fill the need for spirituality, explain the Church's stands in layperson's terms and witness with our lives the value of our faith. It is an important role in the life of the Church and one in which preparation is key.

We, as Secular Franciscans, must prepare for a time when religious and clergy are scarce. In fact, in some areas this is already happening! Roles currently performed by religious and clergy will have to be assigned to carefully prepared lay ecclesial ministers. Secular Franciscans, based upon their commitment to the Church and spirituality, may be asked to step up and fill the void left by decreasing numbers of religious.

With limited contact with clergy and religious, Secular Franciscans might be the only contact a layperson might encounter who is within reach to help them with their crises of faith, questions or spirituality. Our accessibility and availability to serve, both formally and informally, will be crucial to the vitality and life of the future church.

We must be prepared for this eventuality, and this is the reason formation is so essential to our order! Benjamin Franklin once said: "By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail." We *must* be prepared to take on important roles in the Church.

How many times, have brothers and sisters shrunk from taking office or performing an important role in an apostolate?

It might be because they feel they are unprepared.

Their initial formation and/or ongoing formation may not have sufficiently prepared them to accept these roles. This must not happen in the future!

All formation in the Secular Franciscan Order begins with Initial Formation (Orientation, Inquiry, Candidacy), which sets the tone and spirit within the Order for the future. This is why our International Fraternity (CIOFS¹) identified Initial Formation as its *first* priority for all Secular Franciscans.

It is why we now have a uniform Initial Formation program throughout the world, which was presented this past May to all the Regional Formation Directors and which will be coming to your region shortly.

For those involved in Initial Formation in your fraternity, it will be a challenge to implement, but it will be very rewarding to see the effect it will have on those in formation.

It will prepare our future Secular Franciscans to accept their role as agents of change to repair a church broken and scarred by scandal and sexual abuse. However, Initial Formation is not only for the newcomers. I urge *all* Secular Franciscans to get involved with the new Initial Formation curriculum. It can be a way to rejuvenate and enliven our own spiritual life. We must learn the new ways of Initial Formation, which keep the old but add a new depth of knowledge, discernment and spirituality for all Secular Franciscans. CIOFS has said that the new Secular Franciscan needs a foundation in the basics of our faith (catechesis), ecclesiology, theology of the laity, Franciscan theology, tradition and spirituality. All this is needed so the future Secular Franciscan can explain our faith, share our spirituality and be grounded in a deep relationship with our Lord.

If we keep this vision of our future alive, we will be prepared to be "church" for others. Our Church needs us! Christ needs us to be His hands, His face, His love to others! Let us get prepared, "for up to now, we have done nothing!"

¹*Concilium Internationale
Ordinis Franciscani Secularis*

FOR UP TO NOW

SOME THOUGHTS FROM THE NATIONAL FORMATION WORKSHOP

by STEPHEN BERRY, SFO
FIVE FRANCISCAN MARTYRS REGION

“It’s only a Promise.”

How many times have we heard that or similar statements when referring to our SFO Profession Ritual?
How many times have we said something similar ourselves?

It’s Friday morning at the National Formation Workshop in Bellville, Illinois, and Father Richard Trezza, OFM, is speaking about “Profession,” an article he wrote for the new Secular Franciscan Initial Formation (FUN) Manual. At the end of his presentation, everyone in the room knows that our Profession as a Secular Franciscan was not “only a promise.” Many of us realized for the first time the total extent of the commitment we made when we began our promise by saying, “I, N.N., by the grace of God, renew my baptismal promises and consecrate myself to the service of His Kingdom.”

Father Richards’ inspiration for this article and his dedication to the topic is the result of a speech by Fr. Felice Cangelosi, OFM Cap., given at the International Secular Franciscan General Chapter in Hungary, in November 2008. Father Richard said that after he heard that presentation, “I personally was overwhelmed by what he had to say. Even after working with the Seculars since 1968, I had never before heard anything like this concerning Profession. I was on fire.”

Father Richard’s presentation forcefully provides a new insight of Profession for all of us to contemplate and assess how well our personal actions are carrying out our service to God’s Kingdom. As I thought about Fr. Richards’ comments and the energy they generate, I felt I had to read the source of his inspiration. I was not disappointed! Fr. Felice’s presentation on *Profession, A Gift of the Spirit*, beautifully describes how it is:

–A grace and gift;

–Takes on the form of a Pentecost;

–The action of Christ and the Church;

–A commitment to live a penitential life;

–A gift given by the Father;

–A commitment of life and for life;

–A “true Order” a “true Profession”;

–A Secular state that is consecrated to God.

After reading his speech you will realize that “Gospel to life and life to Gospel” takes on a whole new meaning. The Holy Spirit truly had a major role in the preparation of Fr. Felices’ speech. If you have not read his speech, download it from the CIOFS website,

www.ciofs.org/doc/kia8/kia8en13.htm



Make copies for your professed brothers and sisters, and begin to fully appreciate the “Gift of the Spirit” we have received.

In the “For the Formators” section of the “For Up to Now” (FUN) Manual, the Pathway to Profession is depicted in a U-shaped diagram.

As you look at the picture several things become evident:

- There are several steps before the Rite of Admission.
- Many of those steps focus on the issue of discernment on the part of the applicant and the involvement of the fraternity in that process.
- The length of time from first contact with a visitor to the Rite of Admission has been extended for several months.
- Even as candidates we can expect additional focus on the issue of discernment before our profession.

The “U” to me is the perfect image of the path to Profession. You start the “U” at the top left and travel for about a year determining whether you have a vocation to the Secular Franciscan Order.

A lot of applicants fall away during that trip down. When you reach the bottom of the path, you and your fraternity will agree whether you have a vocation.

The Rite of Admission then begins your personal climb up in Franciscan spirituality ending with your consecration to God for the rest of your life.

(Continued on page 29)

(Continued from page 28)

As you review the topical subjects described in the "For the Formator" section, you find that many of them are old subjects discussed many times in our Franciscan journey. The new topics focus primarily on the teachings of the Catholic Church and our role as SFOs in that life. Yes, there are some changes, but most of those are new methodology, a few new topics and a little more time to ensure that we are bringing people into our Order who truly have a vocation.

As one Formation Director suggested to me, "This isn't your fathers' Oldsmobile!"

As you develop a better understanding of the contents and methodology of the new Initial Formation Manual, it becomes clear how the entire focus is on growing spiritually to attain the goal of Profession. That is why the importance of the Profession goal must be clearly understood by all members and applicants.

Profession cannot be just another achievement in our lives.

It must be the step by which we consecrate our lives to the service of God and His Kingdom for the rest of our life. It seems to me that Fr. Felice's presentation is the perfect catalyst to ignite a fire in all our members about the role and responsibilities we accepted when we made our Rite of Profession.

The Five Franciscan Martyrs Region has taken the first step to introduce the FUN Manual into our region. We sent a copy of Fr. Felices' speech and the "For the Formator" article to every Formation Director, in our fraternities, We have asked them to:

- Make copies for all professed members in their fraternity.
- Have them read the documents.
- Start with reading Fr. Felice's speech and then "For the Formator."
- Hold one or two ongoing formation sessions to discuss each document.
- Discuss with your Council the resources you will need to implement the new Formation program.

We are asking the Regional Council for feedback from these discussions and will use them in preparing our workshops later this year.

You may want to try it for your region or fraternity. It is a good opportunity to join with all our fraternities worldwide to begin our focus on the changes we need to make in the next few years. It will require a lot of support and work by all our members, council and formation teams to give this new Initial Formation Manual the acceptance and place it so richly deserves.

I find it interesting that a speech on Profession given by a Franciscan Capuchin Friar,

- At a Secular Franciscan General Chapter that began the Int'l Initial Formation Manual worldwide journey in 2008,

- Inspired a Secular Franciscan Spiritual Assistant to begin talking about it in 2009,

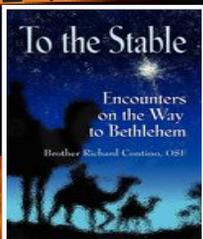
- Becomes the focus of the "Profession" topic in the FUN manual, in 2010,

- And is being used as a way to focus on the importance of our new initial formation program in 2011. A great example of how:

"God works in strange and wonderful ways."

29

NEW BOOK RELEASE



TO THE STABLE: ENCOUNTERS ON THE WAY TO BETHLEHEM

by
BROTHER RICHARD CONTINO, OSF

To the Stable ... is an innovative, but spiritually reflective portrayal of the Gospel accounts of the birth of Christ. This imaginative and prayerful narrative of the Christmas story uses literary creativity to stir the soul, touch the heart and give pause in order to praise God and give thanks for the greatest gift possible—that of His Son Jesus Christ. There is a canvas of imagery in words displayed as we follow that Star and encounter not only Mary and Joseph, but also the innkeeper and his wife; a donkey named Samson; along with the Magi, shepherds and angelic hosts. It is hoped that this book will serve as an opportunity for spiritual enrichment especially for the upcoming season of Advent and Christmas.

Brother Richard Contino, OSF, currently serves as chair of Theology at St. Anthony's High School in Huntington, NY. He serves his fellow brothers in his capacity as Director of Formation, and has served as Spiritual Assistant for many years with the Seculars.

Now available for purchase at local Barnes and Noble stores. Also available at the following websites:
www.amazon.com <http://booklocker.com/books/5640.html> www.barnesandnoble.com



The World Needs Us

by
M. MARKO, SFO
FEATURE EDITOR

Nothing has changed since the first Secular Franciscans came together insofar, as the world still needs good influences throughout society, not just in its churches and synagogues.

Most people attend the services of their choice just once a week (if they go at all); so the only way to ensure a constant touch of God in their lives is for other people to bring it to them.

On an individual level, we can have a positive effect on the people in our families, at our workplaces, in our neighborhood and parishes; on a Fraternity level, we can have a positive effect on a larger scale. One person can donate just so much to a given cause or charity; but a Fraternity on a fund-raising streak can raise thousands. One person can write just so many letters to Congress; a Fraternity can write hundreds of letters and gather thousands of signatures on a petition.

Francis wasn't a political animal, and Franciscans aren't particularly called to politics, either. But it's getting more and more difficult in this day and age to separate politics from peace and justice, from hunger and poverty, from human rights. How can you be pro-life without flying in the face of our nation's laws and military budget? How can you work at a soup kitchen without wondering why the city or county isn't helping fund your endeavors?

It's all well and good to tell people they should follow Christ's example and love everyone, but the world often slams the lid on such sentiments before we can get them out of the box. So merely telling people isn't enough. Someone's got to live the words, to show Christ's example can be followed, to do the loving.

To be sure, loving is not the province solely of Franciscans. I don't think there's an SFO alive who couldn't name any number of good (read that REALLY good) people who aren't Franciscans. But, by the same token, we can't wait for the Gandhi's, the John Paul II's, the Mother Teresa's to spring up. They were all special, yes, but they had no more to start with than the rest of us. They simply refused to wait for someone else to do God's work; they figured they'd do what they could and hoped that some others would do the same. Maybe that's the secret.

Someone once said that if everyone swept in front of their own doorway, the world would be clean. Yeah, it's a cutesy slogan, a great bumper sticker. But it's also very true.

Yet most people would rather complain about their neighbor's dirt than sweep up their own. I can't offer any instant solution to the world's problems. But I do know that another truism, the one about being part of the problem if you're not part of the solution, should be taken to heart. SFOs are no stronger, wiser, or more capable than anyone else where the world's ills are concerned. But anyone who is willing to try, who is ready to do something, is taking steps in the right direction.

Francis, like Christ, preached love of neighbor. But unlike many preachers, he didn't stop there any more than Christ had. He put that love into practice. For instance, he ministered to lepers. Now, I'm sure he wasn't the first to say they were "God's children," too.

But how many people who agreed with that statement actually did anything besides nod their heads? Francis knew that mere agreement wasn't enough. Action was called for. It still is.

SFOs are in the world *for* the world. We may not agree with everything that comes down society's pike; Francis didn't; Jesus didn't. But we can't afford to be selective in our caring for and service to others.

The road to hell is paved with good intentions only if those good intentions aren't acted upon. Jesus walked His talk, so did Francis.

We can do no less.



CALLING FRANCISCAN YOUNG ADULTS

by
KIM TISON, SFO

The mission of the *Franciscan Young Adult Commission* of the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States of America (*YouFra*) is to bring the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to the young adults of America.

To advance this mission, SFOs in Kennebunk are interested in establishing a *YouFra* group in the area to affiliate with our fraternity. We organized a week dedicated to evangelizing area young adults between the ages of 18 and 35 about the mission of *YouFra* in the United States and worldwide.

The week's activities for young adults culminated on September 17, 2011, where we arranged a second annual Spirit-filled Franciscan Day celebration on the grounds of St. Anthony's Franciscan monastery for SFO members in the region, including young adults who may be discerning a possible call to *YouFra*.

During the week of September 13–17, the friars of the monastery hosted members of our Secular Franciscan and *YouFra* International fraternal family, including the National President of the Lithuanian *YouFra* and the SFO, accompanied by the *YouFra* National Spiritual Assistant and young adult members of Lithuanian *YouFra*. Franciscan Youth has a strong evangelistic presence in Lithuania. Speaking about their own call to serve the Lord through the Franciscan organization of *YouFra*, our visitors taught by example through song, discussion and testimony about their experience as young adults who serve the Lord. Visiting members of *YouFra* from Lithuania evangelized local youth by educating others in their age group about the global existence of *YouFra*, and the call to service as part of the Franciscan family.



Holy Mass being celebrated by Fr. Antanas at the Lourde shrine on the monastery grounds.

YouFra-USA has a web page at: <http://www.franciscanyouthusa.com>

and has a strong presence for outreach in many parts of the United States, as shown on their site. The northeastern United States has need of *YouFra* presence, however. One of the goals of *YouFra* USA is given in their mission statement: *To motivate and encourage Regional and Local Fraternities to be mindful of the importance of youth in the Franciscan family.* Included in the statement is the following Biblical quotation from Jeremiah:

The word of the Lord came to me thus: "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations I appointed you." "Ah, Lord God!" I said, "I know not how to speak; I am too young." But the Lord answered me, "Say not, "I am too young." To whomever I send you, you shall go; whatever I command you, you shall speak. Have no fear before them, because I am with you to deliver you," says the Lord. Then the Lord extended His hand and touched my mouth, saying, "See, I place my words in your mouth!" (Jeremiah 1:4-9)

Anne Mulqueen, SFO International Councilor and speaker at our annual fraternal retreat in Kennebunk, wrote in the Winter issue of *TAU-USA*,

"First, I must admit, I am not an authority on youth, nor do I have all the answers on how to attract young people to form fraternity. What I do know is that the charism of our founder is just what spirit-filled, optimistic young people need and are looking for. The obligation to involve and assist young people in the Franciscan family was voted the third priority during the International Chapter in 2008."

She provided guidance to all SFOs in this responsibility of ours in the following words:

Working with youth is not an option. It is an article of our Rule. Article 24 states: "...the council should organize ...meetings with other Franciscan groups, especially with youth groups." We need to pray that the Lord of the Harvest will show us the way to fulfill this priority and follow our Rule."

Through our efforts during *YouFra* week and on Franciscan Day, we will be joining with Anne and the National Secular Franciscans in making the evangelization of American youth a priority, beginning at our local level. If you know of young people who are interested, please email Kim Tison at ktison@biddschools.org

We will be truly blessed to hear from you!



FROM MY CORNER OF THE WORLD

ANNE MULQUEEN, SFO
INTERNATIONAL COUNCILOR, USA
Amulqueen.icusa@gmail.com



Peace and all good to you, my dear brothers and sisters,

The long anticipated Franciscan International Gathering and World Youth Day 2011 has come and gone, but the memory remains for those fortunate enough to attend. In this column, I would like to share the highlights of our pilgrimage to Madrid. It began with a three-day International YouFra Gathering followed by almost a week of WYD activities. With two separate and important events taking place one after the other, we were constantly on the move.



Let me set the scene by quoting from the words and thoughts of Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, OFM Cap. He said, *Many people think they are going on a vacation when they go to World Youth Day. But they are really going on a pilgrimage.* He gave three differences between a vacation and a pilgrimage.

Vacation is about avoiding discomfort, relaxing and having a good time. But a pilgrimage, especially a pilgrimage with a million other people, is hardly a time of comfort. Pilgrimages are a time of sacrifice. In essence, the Archbishop hoped the youth present in Madrid would discover Jesus in a spirit of sacrifice pleasing to God and as a way of growing into more generous and loving persons.

Often when we are on vacation we try to escape ordinary life. On pilgrimage, the Lord calls us to embrace life more completely. It's a time for young people to think about their vocation. The Archbishop asked the youth to reflect on the Lord's call; to be what God wants them to be and to do what God wants them to do.

A vacation is a place we go to have a good time. A pilgrimage is a place we go, not to have a good time, but to become good. Pilgrimage is about conversion and transformation into the image and likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

32

Let me introduce your Representatives:

Mia Clare Mochi, (left) age 16, older sister of twin brothers Luca Julius Mochi, (center); and Cristo Tobias Mochi, (right) age 14. And finally, the designated *responsible person*: Anne Mulqueen, simply young at heart and more often than not bringing up the



rear. All of us were keenly aware that we represented you!

After an uneventful overnight flight from Dulles Airport to Madrid, YouFra volunteers met and escorted us by metro to Colegio Santa Rita, our base of operations for the next ten days. Thus began our pilgrimage.

Cristo was my trusted navigator, and many times he saved me from going in the wrong direction. I can say with all sincerity that although we slept little, perspired profusely, and had blisters on our feet, we were filled with joy and uplifted by the faith and devotion of our fellow pilgrims, the atmosphere of love and service surrounded us.

The first part of our pilgrimage was a 3-day YouFra International Gathering.

The gathering's theme was, **GIVE ME TRUE FAITH (St. Francis).**

The second part of the pilgrimage involved activities leading up to the Holy Father's arrival and then his actual presence and participation in the final days' events. The theme of WYD 2011 was, **ROOTED AND BUILT UP IN JESUS CHRIST, FIRM IN THE FAITH. (Colossians 2:7).**

From Friday, August 12, until Monday, August 15, approximately 300 assembled Franciscan Youth, Young Adults, and their *responsible persons* prayed, played, ate, celebrated Eucharist together and entered into dialogue with each other. These gatherings were similar to an SFO Chapter. There were presentations by those in leadership concerning the challenges to Franciscan youth worldwide. Then time was allotted for working groups to consider these challenges. After that, all groups had an opportunity to present their conclusions.

Although Mia, Cristo and Luca were the youngest present, they entered into the discussions and then presented the conclusions on stage. I was pleased and filled with *holy pride* to see them enter wholeheartedly into the activities of each day.

(Continued on page 33)

(Continued from page 32)

During evening social times, each country had an opportunity to present their national culture through words, songs or skits. Countless fellow pilgrims from other countries told me our teens were the hit! Luca wowed them with an impersonation of Justin Bieber's toss of his hair.

Sunday, August 14, was a day away and pilgrimage to the city of Alcalá de Henares. The center of the city remains essentially medieval, with many winding cobbled streets and historic buildings. It was there Luca was *misplaced* for about 15 frantic minutes, but found confidently walking with the Croatian Franciscans. The city center surrounds Cervantes Square, named for Miguel de Cervantes, author of Don Quixote. A highlight of our pilgrimage to Alcalá was a visit with the Poor Clares.

During the YouFra gatherings, I was struck by the fact that although SFO General Minister Encarnación del Pozo and members of the CIOFS Presidency were present, Ana Fruk, Presidency Youth Councilor, and her commission chaired all meetings. Ana and her commission were responsible for organizing and conducting the proceedings.

On August 15, the International YouFra Gathering ended and World Youth Day activities began.

On the mornings of August 17, 18, and 19th, Catholic catechesis was provided at various locations in Madrid according to the language spoken.

In the afternoons, various activities were provided in the **Franciscan Village**, located at the church of **San Francisco el Grande**.

One of the highpoints of our pilgrimage was a presentation by the Franciscan General Ministers—SFO, OFM, OFM Conv, OFM Cap and TOR. Each general minister spoke on an aspect of **"The Joy of Being Franciscan."**

Then came the Festival of Joy, which included concerts, songs, dances and other presentations. To our delight, SFO General Minister Encarnita del Pozo danced as a ballerina during a magic act—tutu and all!

The Franciscan Village closed its doors on Friday, August 19, and then all attention was focused on the Holy Father and the events surrounding his presence.

At the welcoming ceremony, on August 18 at Madrid's Barajas Airport, Pope Benedict stated clearly his hope for the youth. He said,



BOTTOM ROW—L-TO-R:
Anne Mulqueen, Cristo, Lucy Almirenaz, Luca, and the Hong Kong kids.



OUR 4 GENERAL SPIRITUAL ASSISTANTS FROM L-TO-R:
FR. AMANDO, TOR; FR. IVAN, OFM (PARTIALLY HIDDEN);
FR. MARTIN, OFM CONV; FR. AMANUEL, OFM CAP.



THE GENERALS AND SFO GENERAL MINISTER ENCARNACIÓN DEL POZO (far right).

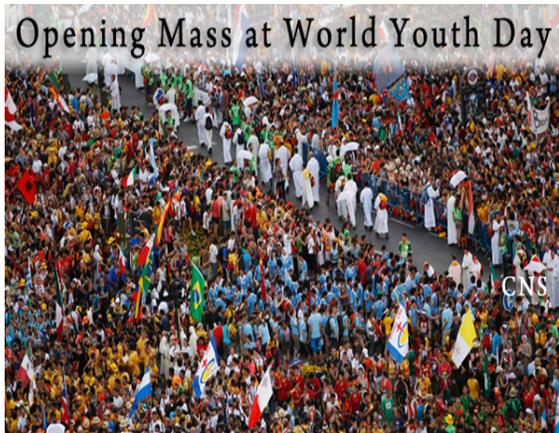
"I have come here to meet thousands of young people from all over the world, Catholics committed to Christ searching for the truth that will give real meaning to their existence.

I come as the Successor of Peter, to confirm them all in the faith, with days of intense pastoral activity, proclaiming that Jesus Christ is the way, the truth and the life; to motivate the commitment to build up the Kingdom of God in the world among us; to exhort young people to know Christ personally as a friend and so, rooted in his person, to become faithful followers and valiant witnesses.

THE POPE'S OPENING STATEMENT SET THE TONE FOR THE REST OF HIS APPEARANCES.

(Continued on page 34)

Opening Mass at World Youth Day



Later that day, the Holy Father greeted the young pilgrims at the Plaza de Cibeles and prayed that the days ahead would be rich in prayer, teaching and encounters that would lead them to the most important encounter—one with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Friday, August 19, USA's Mia Mochi was chosen to stand at Station Four of the Via Crucis. Pope Benedict reminded the young people that the cross is not a sign of failure, but an expression of self-giving in love.

To share the entire significance of those ten days in a few pages is impossible. I pray that if this column ignites a spark of interest, you will "Google" WYD 2011. There you will find complete texts of the Holy Father's addresses and lots of pictures. You might also visit the YouFra webpage: <http://www.ciofs.org/youfra.htm>



Who knows, perhaps one of you reading this column will hear the call of God to serve the youth of the United States as their Youth Commissioner.

Thank you for giving Mia, Cristo, Luca and me the opportunity to enter into the activities offered and, with the grace of God, develop ... **true faith** (St. Francis) and be ... **built up in Jesus Christ, firm in the faith**. (Colossians 2:7).

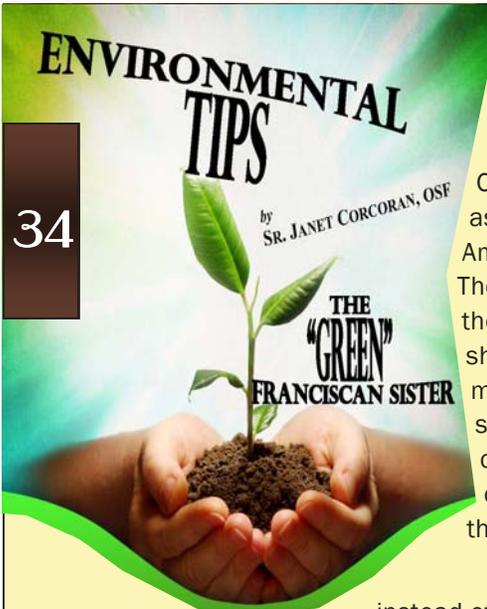
With fraternal affection and in peace, Your sister, *Anne*

THE "GREEN" FRANCISCAN SISTER

As St. Francis had a reverence and respect for all of creation, may we, too, continue to be respectful of our environment.

One way to be respectful is the purchase of environmentally-friendly tea bags such as organic ones, chlorine free, without staples, tags or strings. It is of note that America played a key role in the invention of tea bags, which happened by chance. The story goes, Sir Thomas Sullivan, a seller of tea in New York City, decided to reduce the costs of sending tea samples to prospective purchasers by eliminating the tin shipping container for them and replacing it with tea samples in hand-sewn silk muslin bags. When customers received them, they were confused and after giving it some thought, threw the bags into a pot of hot water. Sir Sullivan was shocked when customers began asking for tea in silk muslin bags. He realized he had mistakenly created the first tea bag. Around 1904, Sir Thomas began marketing the tea bags in the United States and around the world.

For those who drink tea, there are many ways one may reuse the tea bags instead of disposing of them. Following are some examples of the reuse of tea bags:



☞ You can reuse a tea bag by breaking it and feeding outdoor plant(s) by sprinkling the tea around their soil. This action enriches the soil by increasing nitrogen levels and also gives earthworms (fertilizer) something delicious to eat. Also, the tea bags are great organic fertilizer for potted house plants;

☞ You can, as an alternative to using baking soda as a deodorizer, place a used tea bag in a porous container like a cotton bag, and let the tea absorb the odors of the refrigerator.

☞ Also, by emptying the used tea bags in your vacuum cleaner, the next time you vacuum your carpet will smell nice;

☞ You can effectively remove grease and grime on mirrors, floors, and even linoleum, by using old tea bags.

☞ Make a cold brew with used teabags and then use it as a cleaning solution, for example, on counter tops;

☞ You can add used teabags to the compost pile. Some teabags compost faster than others, depending on the bag material.

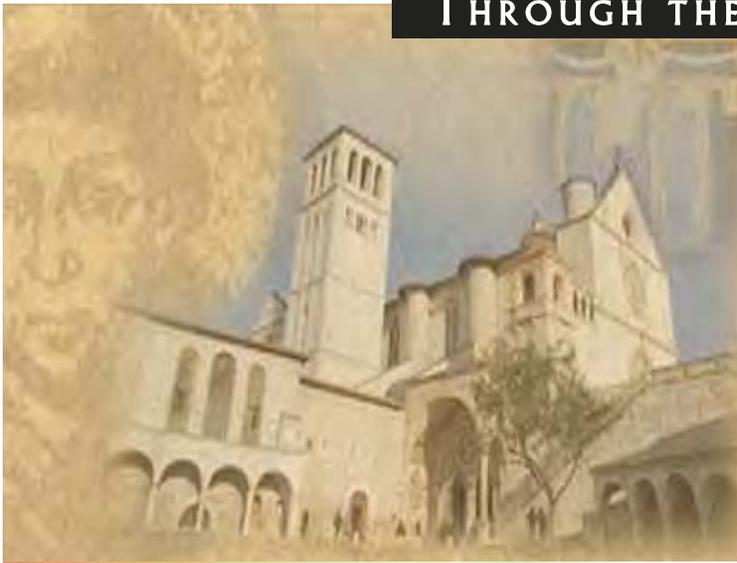
☞ Also, you can bury the bag in the ground for the enhancement of soil.

In our day-to-day life, there are many ways to be environmentally friendly, and these tips about the reuse of tea bags is one of them. May we continue to reuse, reduce, recycle and conserve the goods of our sister, Mother Earth.

by
FAITH LIBBE, SFO
 FEATURE EDITOR

“DAY OF REFLECTION, DIALOGUE AND PRAYER IN ASSISI”

PART ONE IN A SERIES



I had no idea I would be going to Assisi this year. It all began in April, when in the midst of checking my e-mail, I decided to read the *Vatican Information Services* headlines (I often pass by it, as I receive it on a daily basis). The following headline absolutely jumped out of me: “Day of Reflection, Dialogue and Prayer in Assisi.” I was captivated and read on.

Following are some of the highlights I read in the article:

“On 1 January 2011, after the Angelus, Pope Benedict XVI announced that he wished to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the historic meeting that took place in Assisi on 27 October 1986, at the wish of the Venerable Servant of God John Paul II.

On the day of the anniversary, 27 October this year, the Holy Father intends to hold a ‘*Day of reflection, dialogue and prayer for peace and justice in the world,*’ making a pilgrimage to the home of St. Francis and inviting fellow Christians from different denominations, representatives of the world’s religious traditions and, in some sense, all men and women of good will, to join him once again on this journey. The Day will take as its theme: “Pilgrims of truth, pilgrims of peace.”

The communiqué concludes by highlighting that “the Pope asks the Catholic faithful to join him in praying for the celebration of this important event, and he is grateful to all those who will be able to be present in St. Francis’ home town to share this spiritual pilgrimage.”

As I read this article, I felt so deeply in my being that I would love to be present for this awesome, historic event in the town of our Seraphic Father, St. Francis!

I immediately typed an e-mail and sent it to my fraternity, Lady Poverty Fraternity in Winter Park, Florida, informing them of the event and hoping that I might find a travel companion or two.

I concluded the e-mail to my fraternity with the following words, “This all might be a stretch...but if you can’t dream, such dreams will never happen! I just know I’d love to be there for this historic event (well I love to be in Assisi anytime...but for this...wow!)...Please let me know if any of you might be interested in going...”

Three months have passed and to my amazement (and delight!) a group of 13 of us are now planning to make a sacred pilgrimage to Assisi for this blessed event! Seven of us in the group are SFOs and in the next issue of *TAU-USA* we will share our journey through Assisi with all of you, including a day in LaVerna and culminating with the Day of Reflection, Dialogue and Prayer.



If any of you plan to be in Assisi on October 27 for this event, please let me know! For everyone else, please be one with us from wherever you are, as we join our worldwide Franciscan family and all those of good will, in prayer for peace and justice in our world.

The following link offers great information on the event, including an invitation letter from the Conference of the Franciscan Family, resource materials to plan prayer services: <http://spiritodiassisi.wordpress.com/english>

Peace and all good — Pace e bene!

Faith



As I submit this article, it is early August here in Iowa and the heat index has consistently been above 100 for many days. In our part of the state, the heat and drought are adversely affecting the corn and soybean crops. On the other side of the state, near my hometown, the Missouri River has been well out of its banks for weeks, with folks being displaced from their homes. In some cases homes have simply been swept away. This has occurred after the incredible spring when so many were affected by floods and springs in several of our fraternity regions. There is no doubt that my brother and sister Secular Franciscans have responded to the immediate needs of their family and neighbors with incredibly generosity without great fanfare. Thank you for responding to those needs!

And around the world there have been disasters relating to weather that have also caught our attention. The earthquake and tsunami in Japan occurred so quickly, the loss of life was so extensive, that for many people the reaction was disbelief. But prayer and donations have enabled us to be in solidarity with our brothers and sisters there, so far from us.

Now we learn that rains that usually fall from October to December failed to appear in 2010 in Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia. Spring rains this year were erratic and insufficient. As a result, the area lost two growing seasons.

This drought has placed 10 million people in dire need of humanitarian aid. Kenya, in addition to facing its own drought problems, is also faced with refugees from Somalia.

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

Prices for staple foods, already high, are increasing, nearly doubling already. There has not been a drought of this magnitude in the area in 60 years.

Catholic Relief Services reports that in Ethiopia they are leading a program funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development that involves working with nine other humanitarian organizations to distribute food. The reach of that effort is expanding from 400,000 to 1 million beneficiaries. CRS is working with Caritas Ethiopia to identify other critical needs.

In Kenya, CRS and partners are responding to the needs of the Somali refugees and their local hosts, who are themselves suffering because of the drought. Through our many ongoing water, sanitation and agriculture projects in Kenya, CRS is also responding to Kenyans' needs during this crisis.

We can help by praying for the people of East Africa. CRS has prayers and petitions at:
<http://uspartners.crs.org/downloads/horn-of-africa-drought-prayer.pdf>



And we can make donations to the CRS East Africa Emergency Fund. As with other such relief efforts, donations can be sent to our National Fraternity Treasurer, Dennis Ross, SFO, 8933 Trailwood Ct. Mentor, OH 44060-2131.

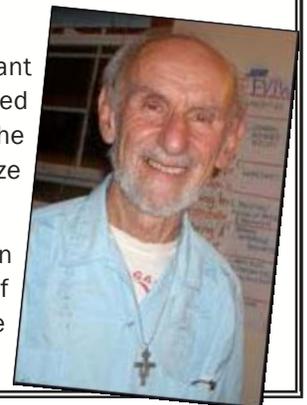
Peace and all good, *Kent*

JUSTICE, PEACE & INTEGRITY OF CREATION AWARD

FR. LOUIS VITALE, OFM, a Franciscan Friar known for protests against war and torture and advocacy for the poor, is the 2011 recipient of the U.S. Secular Franciscan Order's *Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Award*. The award will be presented at the SFO National Chapter, to be held October 25-30, 2011 at St. Francis Retreat Center in San Juan Bautista, CA.

Formerly known as the *Peace Award*, it was renamed this year to capture the significant efforts in the areas of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation. JPIC Chair Kent Ferris, SFO, noted "Our Franciscan *Rule* reminds us of our responsibility to 'individually and collectively be in the forefront of promoting justice by the testimony of our lives.' The JPIC Award allows us to recognize those who have modeled such courageous efforts."

Letters of nomination told not only of the issues Father Louie has focused on, but also on his personal lived experience. "Father Louie is the ultimate model for us on our journey of following in the footsteps of Sts. Francis and Clare. Watch for more on Father Vitale and the award presentation in the next issue of *TAU-USA*."





ELEMENTS OF
 FRANCISCAN UNITY
 FRANCISCAN UNITY

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

This past April and May, I had the privilege of helping to present two workshops on the Elements of Franciscan Unity. Through a long process of work and discernment, the Joint Committee on Franciscan Unity (on which I have written in previous articles) shaped this list, beginning in 2005 (Marcella Bina and Jean D. were our representatives), and culminating in 2007. This list was then submitted to, and approved by, the leadership of our Orders.

We had already offered two similar workshops to national leaders of our Orders, and these were so successful we decided to “take the show on the road.” Our workshop in April was held at Little Portion Friary in Long Island, and the one in May at Mercy Center in Burlingame, California. These locations themselves illustrate the ecumenical nature of the Committee’s work: Little Portion is the home of Anglican friars, and Mercy Center is run by the Sisters of Mercy.

In both workshops, the presentations on *Baptism and Vocation* were facilitated by me, *Charism* by Anne Mulqueen, SFO, and *Prophetic Voice* by Father Masud Syedullah, TSSF. I cannot recreate either the marvelous presentations, nor the exciting interaction and discussion of the participants, nor could I even begin to do justice to the sharing that took place simply in our evening social, but I can say that real relationships were born, and seeds for local and regional joint activities were planted.

The approved descriptions of the Five Elements, and thus, the kernels of the presentations, are:

BAPTISM:

Our Franciscan Orders understand that our Franciscan Unity springs from a shared relationship with God through Holy Baptism. The waters of our birth in the name of the Triune God signify our unity in one baptism by the one God.

VOCATION:

Our call to Franciscan Vocation implies being conformed to the image of our Lord Jesus Christ by means of the radical interior change that the Gospel defines as conversion—taking up our cross daily to follow Christ. Our particular vocation is to observe the Gospel by following the examples of Saints Francis and Clare.

CHARISM:

As Franciscans, we see in the life of St. Francis of Assisi these gifts of the Holy Spirit: Holy Poverty (humility), love and joy. Through our rules and through the individual and collective work of our Orders, we seek to manifest these gifts.

CHRIST CENTERED:

Franciscan spirituality is Christocentric to the extent that Francis fell in love with Jesus. This transformed Francis’ life. All that Francis did was shaped by what he saw in the Incarnation and in the ministry and passion of Jesus.

PROPHETIC VOICE:

Fundamental to Franciscan spirituality is a commitment to strive for justice and peace among all people—and to affirm the inter-relationship and holiness of all creation. In a world torn asunder by conflict, division, intolerance and exploitation, our unified prophetic witness is an expression of God’s light in a dark planet.

Our gathering ended with a celebration of a common Agape service, also approved by our three Orders. Because of the sad divisions among Christians, Franciscans cannot share a common Eucharistic table. However, as with our Holy Father Francis, we do what we can to help heal that division. As Francis himself blessed and shared bread among his friars, we, too, shared our common feast.

Jesus told St. Francis to repair his Church, which was falling into ruin. Today we, also, live in a Church torn apart by doctrinal, ethnic and political divisions. We live in a world torn apart by the same divisions. According to Catholic belief, the Church is the Sacrament of the on-going Presence and Ministry of Jesus in the world. It is the leaven that should raise the entire loaf. As long as the followers of Jesus bicker among ourselves, we cannot give a credible witness to our proclaimed faith that Jesus came to heal all divisions. Jesus calls us Franciscans, just as surely as he called Francis, to repair the Church. Like Francis, we do not know what Jesus ultimately has in mind. However, like Francis, we can begin with what we can do and leave the rest up to Jesus. As members of the SFO, TSSF and OEF, it is our hope that by working together, we can do our little portion of this witness.

Dick McCloskey

by
KAREN CLIFFORD

Aerial photographer Dick McCloskey sees things from a different angle than most of the general population as he flies in an aircraft in the skies of Indiana and Michigan. In the past few years, McCloskey has also viewed his faith from a different angle, with a perspective from the teachings of the Secular Franciscan Order.



Dick standing in front of the airplane he uses for his business, AeroVison Aerial Photography, a division of R.E. McCloskey and Associates, a real estate appraisal and consulting firm.

McCloskey is a cradle Catholic who was, by his own admission, a very lukewarm Catholic for many years.

"After my daughter, Katie, died in the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center buildings in New York City on September 11, 2001, I found very little solace in the Catholic Church. I never lost my faith in God, but I had absolutely no interest in the Church and became very arrogant in my attitude toward Her teachings and practices," says McCloskey.

McCloskey's journey to becoming a Secular Franciscan began in October 2005, when he and his wife Anne joined fellow parishioners from St. Pius X in Granger, Indiana on a pilgrimage to Italy.

"Toward the end of this two-week adventure we stopped in Assisi. We were sitting in the crypt of the Basilica of Saint Francis, waiting for the chapel to become available upstairs where our group was to have a private Mass.

As I was looking around the crypt, I saw the sarcophagus that contains the remains of Saint Francis above the altar. A very strange feeling came over me," says McCloskey.

He continues, "I sensed a presence, but I did not hear anything. However, I clearly received a message telling me that I needed to get my spiritual life back in order. For the remaining days of the pilgrimage I was very confused.

I knew that my spiritual life was a mess, but I didn't know what to do about it."

His encounter at the crypt of Saint Francis had a huge impact on his faith journey.

"When we came home I made an appointment with Father Bill Schooler to go to confession. My last confession had been in 1963, 42 years previously," McCloskey explains. A relative on Anne's side of the family is a Secular Franciscan.

McCloskey told this relative of the experience he had at St. Francis' crypt and she invited him to the Secular Franciscan meeting at the convent in Mishawaka, Indiana.

During that meeting, he felt the same presence he had experienced at Assisi. "I just knew that St. Francis was leading me back to Christ and the Church," he recalls.

McCloskey entered the formation process in April 2006 and made his profession in the Secular Franciscan Order on July 12, 2008. He is currently the formation director of the Immaculate Conception Fraternity in Mishawaka.

The qualities of simplicity, a spirit of poverty, love of the poor and devotion to Jesus through His Blessed Mother found in the Order fit McCloskey's persona, he emphasizes.

"Franciscans are intensely spiritual in a laid-back, joyful way.

(Continued on page 39)

(Continued from page 38)

We support each other spiritually in our individual ministries. We are all about looking for Christ in other people and in each other.

Franciscans are people of service. We find Christ in others by serving them," he says.

Among McCloskey's paid vocations is his 36 year career as a real estate appraiser. In 1998, he learned to fly small airplanes and now holds a private pilot certificate with instrument and sea plane ratings. This eventually led him to put aerial photos in his appraisal reports.

"I thought that I might be able to combine flying with aerial photography to support my flying hobby. I started AeroVision Aerial Photography in 2002 as a result of this thought process."

As an aerial photographer McCloskey sells his photos to various markets, including real estate brokers and developers, construction companies, government agencies and various individuals.



Demonstrating how he takes aerial photography through the window of his high-wing Cessna 172 aircraft.

Faith also impacts his aerial photography business. "It allows me to take off from terra firma in a small airplane knowing that God will take good care of us.

I have been able to use my photography to support good causes. I have also given many samples of my photography for silent auctions to raise money, such as for The Center for the Homeless, St. Monica's Home and School Association, and Habitat for Humanity in the South Bend, Indiana area."

McCloskey stresses that God is always at the center of his vocations and his desire to be of service to others.

"After 35 years as a piece of spiritual driftwood, I guess God realized I was never going to come back to Him without some drastic intervention on His part.

Our Lord realized Saint Francis' talent for bringing people close to Him, and He put him to work on my case. I am eternally grateful for God's unique intervention in my life."



Fraternity Minister Cyndi Pilot, SFO; and Dick McClosky, Formation Director prepare for the Order's Mass of Profession at St. Francis Convent in Mishawaka, Indiana on October 9, 2010.

—Karen Clifford is a freelance writer for *Today's Catholic*, a weekly newspaper from the diocese of Fort Wayne/South Bend, Indiana.

UPCOMING EVENTS - CRUISE TO THE CARIBBEAN

New Date! New Ports!

Lower prices for Inside and Ocean View Staterooms!



Join Fr. Stephen Gross, OFM Conv. and the Secular Franciscans on a Caribbean Get-a-Way Sunday, January 22, 2012.

Sponsored by the St. Francis Region

Board the beautiful *Norwegian Spirit* in New Orleans, Louisiana and set sail for a fabulous eight days/seven nights cruise embarking on Sunday, January 22—Sunday, January 29.

Once at sea you will cruise the blue waters of the Caribbean and be treated to Port of Call day visits to Costa Maya, Mexico; Belize City, Belize; Roatan Island, Honduras; and Cozumel, Mexico. Father Steve will be celebrating Mass daily. The *Norwegian Spirit* has a wide variety of delicious food selections with up to 13 different restaurants and dining rooms; you'll find something to satisfy your every craving. Affordable staterooms from \$595—\$925 per person, (based on double occupancy) and only \$250 per person will hold your stateroom.

Join us! Everyone is welcome. Book now for best choice of staterooms. For more information contact

Diane Halal, SFO, at dhalal@juno.com or Mark Furlan at mfurlan@CruiseOne.com



UPCOMING EVENTS & GATHERINGS



CANTICLE CAMPUS
NOW FORMING FALL 2011 CLASSES
BEGINNING OCTOBER 3, 2011 —
ENDING DECEMBER 10, 2011.

We will be studying from the book, *Franciscan Prayer*, by Sr. Ilia Delio, OSF.

The following is a quote from the cover of her book: By examining Saint Francis' doctrine of prayer through the twin lens of Saints Clare and Bonaventure, this book provides us with a long overdue spiritual and theological synthesis which will be treasured by all who love the Franciscan tradition. A significant contribution, beautifully presented." Lawrence S. Cunningham

To register, email Francesca Wigle, TSSF: fwigle@gmail.com or
Chris Hickmann, SFO: hickmcm@hotmail.com

They'll send your access information in September. All are invited and there is no cost to take the class.

"Canticle Campus" is a joint effort within the Franciscan family, both Catholic and Protestant, to establish a central location of education and dialog towards building a non-profit collaboration of members of Franciscan Order and Franciscan-hearted people.

Visit their website at: <http://www.canticlecampus.org>

Is Your Region Planning a Formation Workshop?

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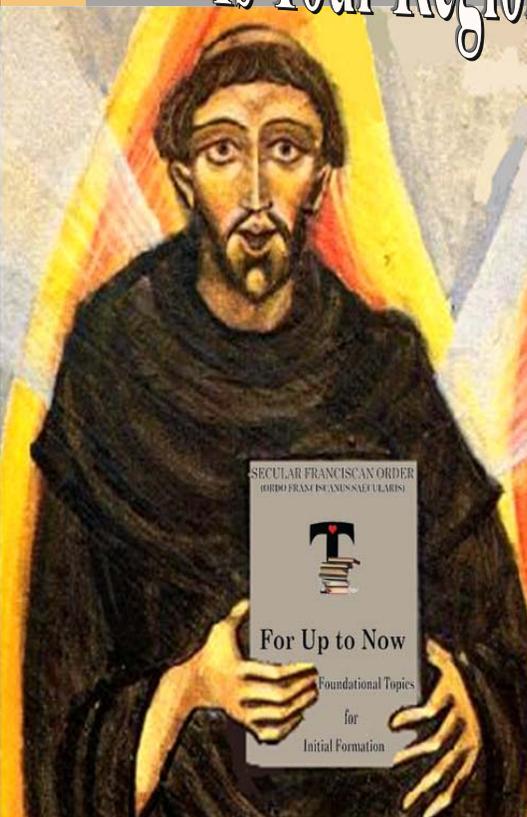
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Travel expenses for NFC members are covered.
The only cost to your region is room and board.

For more ideas on how to have a successful and FUN workshop, phone 509.582.7606; or email Bob Fitzsimmons, SFO, Chair of the National Formation Commission at:

RLfitsfo@frontier.com



GATHERINGS

ST. JOHN NEUMANN FRATERNITY of the St. Katherine Drexel Region hosted a "Chapter of Mats" at their monthly gathering on August 17, 2011. Members from the fraternities of the Consolation of Christ; St. Francis, Springfield, PA; St. Patrick, Wilmington, DE; and San Damiano, Wilmington, DE, joined the host fraternity. Guests listened to accounts of the first Chapter of Mats as recorded in *The Little Flowers of St. Francis*, sang appropriate praise songs and blessed the meal with grace.

After the meditations, guests enjoyed a repast consisting only of foods eaten during the time of Francis: bread, cheese, fruit, dried vegetables, seeds and hard boiled eggs.

A balmy summer evening and the beautiful gardens of the Franciscan Spiritual Center of Aston, PA made this a truly memorable occasion.



Submitted by
SANDRA KUSHNER, SFO
ST. JOHN NEUMANN FRATERNITY



Ministers Jean Piziak, SFO, of the St. John Neumann Fraternity and John Oscar, SFO, Minister of the St. Patrick Fraternity.

SUMMER SEMINAR IN LORETTO, PA.

by **CYL MALJAN, SFO**
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, CNSA
MINISTER, LADY POVERTY REGION

The latest presentation of the "Summer Seminars for Secular Franciscans," focusing on "Aspects of Fraternity," at Saint Francis University in Loretto, Pa, ended on Sunday, June 26, 2011, with another successful gathering with Fr. Lester Bach, OFM Cap, and Mary Bittner, SFO.

It was a weekend centered on love and fraternity! Participants came from ten regions and nine states, several for their third or fourth visit, others for the first time. All experienced the "community of love," the key of a vibrant fraternity.

The Summer Seminars began in 2008 as the result of the desire of Fr. Gabriel Zeis, TOR, University President, to offer something special for Secular Franciscans at the University. The plan was to offer a seminar each year between Quinquennials. Topics and speakers have been chosen with the cooperation of the National Executive Council. The Seminar is endorsed and strongly encouraged by the National Executive Council of the SFO.



The first seminar was on "Development of Lay Leadership in the Secular Franciscan Order" with Fr. Bernard Tickerhoof, TOR, and Anne Mulqueen, SFO, as presenters.

The 2009 Summer Seminar, "Franciscan Spirituality for Secular Franciscans," featured Vinal Van Benthem, SFO, and Bob "Fitz" Fitzsimmons, SFO.

Pat Brandwein-Ball, SFO, and Fr. Joseph Nangle, OFM, presented "Peace and Justice for Secular Franciscans" in 2010.

Each of the seminars has been well received, with an average of 75 SFOs from across the country in attendance.

The first two seminars were organized by Fr. Kevin Queally, TOR. Currently, the seminars are administered through the University's Institute for Contemporary Franciscan Life and a planning committee of a TOR and several Secular Franciscans.

The next Summer Seminar will be in 2013, after the 2012 Quinquennial in Chicago.

SISTER DEATH



Our Franciscan brother, **JUAN RENOM CARULLA, OFS**, husband of our beloved General Minister, Encarnación del Pozo, passed away May 3, 2011. The SFO has been blessed with the prayers that brother Juan has offered for all Secular Franciscans around the world, during the course of his long disease. We thank the Lord for his life and for the invaluable support given to our General Minister during her service.



Explanation of Spanish surnames: In Spain surnames do not change with marriage. That is why Juan Renom (father's family name) Carulla (mother's family name) is different from Encarnita's name del Pozo.

H₂O PROJECT RESULTS



The H₂O Project for the 2011 year came to its conclusion this past May 31st, 2011, having raised a total amount of **\$13,628.50** which will be donated to Catholic Relief Services for clean drinking water in Haiti.

A total of 19 Regions and many individuals participated in this year's Fundraising campaign, making it a holy success.

Additional donations received after June 1st, 2011 will be donated towards the 2012 H₂O Project.

These should be mailed to: NAFRA c/o Dennis Ross, SFO, 8933 Trailwood Ct. Mentor, OH 44060.

RECOGNITION AND CONGRATULATIONS

St. Anthony of Padua Fraternity, Oak Lawn, IL, celebrated the Anniversaries of

ROSALEEN NEVEN, 65 years (*photo left*);
MARY DALTON, 50 years, (*center*); and
DOLORES KARNIA, 65 years, (*right*).

Fr. David Rodriguez, OFM, was the celebrant. Many family and friends attended. May God Bless these ladies.



Submitted by JOANN LIPKA, SFO



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS REGIONAL FRATERNITY who is celebrating their 15th Anniversary of Establishment. A special celebration was held this past April during their yearly "family" gathering, *Convivenza*. This year offered two excellent guest speakers: Richard Morton, SFO, former National SFO Minister; and Mary Stronach, SFO, Co-Chair of the National Public Relations Committee.

This past August, the Region held their Annual Regional Retreat at the beautiful Mount Alvernia Retreat House in Wappingers Falls, NY. Following last years' double track formula, Fr. Andre Cirino, OFM and Deacon Joseph Patrona, SFO, were retreat Masters for the professed members. Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM, Regional and Provincial Spiritual Assistant from Holy Name Province led the separate track offered specifically for Candidates in Initial Formation. The double track formula once again proved to be a great success with the sold-out retreat. The double agenda allows everyone to be together at the same place and time, sharing meals, recreation, prayer and worship while allowing for two completely separate sets of input talks and experiences geared to the participants.

ELECTION RESULTS CONGRATULATIONS TO

BOB FITZSIMMONS, SFO
REGIONAL MINISTER
AND ALL THE NEWLY ELECTED
COUNCIL MEMBERS OF THE
TROUBADOURS OF PEACE REGION

JAMES CARLSON, SFO
REGIONAL MINISTER
AND ALL THE NEWLY ELECTED
COUNCIL MEMBERS OF THE
LAVERNA REGION



On Thursday, August 11, the Feast of St. Clare, **CLARE McCLUGGAGE AND MICHAEL REIDY** were married in St. Louis, MO. Father Kevin Queally, TOR joyfully performed the Mass and witnessed the couple's ministering the Sacrament to each other. It was a most blessed

occasion, heightened by seeing our National Secretary Jan Parker, my predecessor Patrick Mendes as the Best Man, and by witnessing, with my own eyes, Ed Shirley and his lovely wife dancing a rather nasty twist.

Congratulations Clare and Michael.
Ad multos annos! —**TOM BELLO**

PHOTOS CREDIT: BEV SHIRLEY



CONGRATULATIONS TO Lois McLain, SFO; who celebrated her 60th anniversary of profession on June 26! Ad Multos Annos, Lois!



LOIS AND FR. TOM WEST, OFM

While reading the Spring issue of the *TAU-USA*, I noticed the article about the 50th anniversary of J. Patrick Mendes, SFO. I offer him my congratulations. I was inspired to write to about a member of our emerging fraternity who just celebrated her 60th anniversary of profession.

Her name is Lois McLain, she transferred into Blessed Giles of Assisi, Emerging Fraternity just over two years ago. For many years she had been an "Isolate" member of the SFO. She was granted this status by the Regional Spiritual Assistant when she moved to Sonora, CA in the 1970's. At that time there were no fraternities in this area; in fact we will be the first SFO Fraternity, in our diocese when we are established, hopefully next spring. When she learned of us she contacted us to see about a transfer. We had a bit of trouble finding her records up to the time of getting Isolate status. She was originally professed by St. Elizabeth Fraternity in Oakland, CA and transferred to St. Anthony's in San Francisco. After that she moved to Sonora and it seems that her change of status was lost. Working with regional minister Cindy Wesley, and the regional Spiritual Assistant Br. Bob Brady, OFM we got it all straightened out.

Lois had always continued to live by the "Rule" as a Secular Franciscan, or as she put it, a Third Order Franciscan. This was confirmed by all who knew her all this time. She is a cancer survivor, has had knee replacement surgery, and with her business partner still runs her accounting business from her home. She's quite a lady.

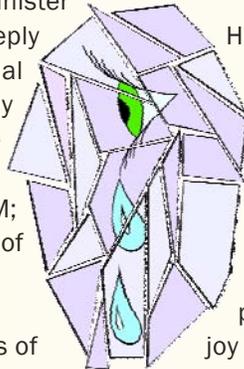
We celebrated her 60th anniversary on June 26th, (her original date of profession was June 6, 1951). The celebration was held at All Saint's Catholic Church in Twain Harte, CA. She renewed her commitment during mass, witnessed by myself, Chuck Brewer, Minister and Mary Mazotti, our Spiritual Assistant. The celebrant was Fr. Tom West, OFM the Guardian of St. Boniface Church in San Francisco, CA. The Mass was followed with a reception in the church hall. It was a beautiful experience for us all, and even roused some interest in the SFO from some in attendance during Mass. It's not often someone makes it to 60 years in any organization. However, the more I get to know Lois, we might want to start planning on a 65th anniversary.

Submitted by CHUCK BREWER, SFO; Blessed Giles of Assisi Emerging Fraternity—Blessed Junipero Serra Region.

On the Death of Osama Bin Laden

The electrifying news that Osama Bin Laden had been killed gripped the attention of our nation and the world, occasioning powerful and conflicting emotions and reactions. It also invites us, as Franciscans, to stand back and reflect prayerfully on what God might be inviting us to in the wake of this death.

Like so many, perhaps our first response, on a very human level, was a sense of relief. The sinister attacks of September 11, 2001, are still deeply embedded in our national and personal consciousness. These images surface not only anger, but also fear and unease at the precarious nature of life. On 9/11, we lost one of our own brothers, Fr. Mychal Judge, OFM; many people we serve also suffered the death of relatives and friends in the attacks.



Since 2001, we have felt the emptiness of the loss of loved ones, as well as the darkness of fear that 9/11 opened in all our lives: will we be attacked again?

Osama Bin Laden in many ways became the embodiment of our fears. The announcement of his death, then, may have produced an understandable dimension of cathartic release — a sense, or at least hope, that things may be better. Such a release may initially express itself in joy. But if we are honest with ourselves as Christians, we quickly feel quite uncomfortable with a joy that comes from the death of another human being — even one we call our enemy. Isn't this discomfort the sting of conscience reminding us that as Gospel people, as Easter people in this season of hope, we are called by God to something more? We are reminded in the Word of God:

“Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles; or the LORD will see it and be displeased.”

Proverbs 24:17-18a

So, if we are not to rejoice at this event, what is the invitation of God?

We are reminded that all good things we hope for, even overcoming death itself, are possible through the love and mercy of God. The risen Christ's words to His followers, “Peace be with you,” invite us to remember that, as evil as the actions of Osama Bin Laden were, he was still a beloved child of God. Yes!

While God would never condone the hateful actions of Bin Laden, never was God's love withdrawn from him. This sobering truth of the Gospel is a call to us to reinvigorate our efforts to resolve conflict at all levels of our own lives: personal, political and social. The killing of Osama Bin Laden means that there is no opportunity, at least in this life and in his case, for reconciliation with an “enemy.”

However, we are left to contemplate those people in our lives, at all levels, with whom working towards reconciliation is still a possibility.

Reflecting on this decisive moment in our country should move us to prayer. We pray for Osama Bin Laden, his family and those who follow his leadership: that they may not harden their hearts at his killing and seek revenge. We pray, too, for ourselves, that we might not rest in joy or harden our own hearts at his death.

Second, we are called to redouble our efforts to seek peaceful solutions to international and domestic conflicts, enjoining our leaders to seek lasting peace in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Israel-Palestine, Sudan, Congo and other locations torn by warfare. As Franciscans, we are particularly aware that reconciliation can repair the broken relationships of humanity — as such, it must be one of our highest goals.

Finally, in our own lives, we are called to do all that is within our ability to reconcile with others with whom we have conflict or disagreement. This is also an invitation for greater interfaith dialogue. We must not allow any opportunity to seek reconciliation to pass by unanswered.

Reconciliation is always possible because of the steadfast love of our God who remains forever committed to us. We pray that we may never lose hope, and that we may have the faith and openness to seek to journey with all others of good will. We offer these reflections with humility, believing that as we respond to the invitation to imitate the love of God revealed in the dying and rising of Jesus Christ, more wondrous and unimaginable gifts await us all.

May the Lord Give You Peace,

*Leadership of Holy Name Province
Franciscan Friars*

EVALUATION REVIEWS ON FUN

—I can't find words to thank the NFC for the enormous amount of work that it took to produce the manual and provide the workshop. I am very excited to take the materials back to my region and start planning workshops in various areas of our region.

—This was very exciting. That manual, the presentations, all will help to revitalize our fraternities and members. This also gives us a way to show the larger picture, the connectedness of the SFD members and individual fraternities to the Region, the National, and International fraternities. A key tool for revitalization and attracting new members.

—I'm very impressed with all the work you did. The manual is very good. I have so much work to do!

—You make us believe it is possible.

—I did greatly appreciate the profession and theology content. Of course this is more inspiring in general than some other sections.

—So much information! It will take a while to digest and put into practical practice. It was good to renew and "re-member" who we are.

—Outstanding! Very comprehensive and thorough. Looking forward to implementing this in the Region as well as at local fraternity gatherings.

—I can see how this will affect fraternity life.
Good Inquirers = Good Candidates = Good Professions.

—The challenge is to unite ongoing formation with initial formation so everyone is on the same page. In some situations it is going to be about subtracting, not adding, to ensure that certain fraternities come around to this tool as a resource of standardization and do not continue making their own rules and requirements for profession.

—THE NEW MATERIALS WILL ENRICH OUR CURRENT FORMATION PROGRAMS AND FILL IN SOME OF THE HOLES.

—We have waited a long time for this and our expectations were quite high – those expectations were not disappointed.

This has been more than what we had hoped for.

—We pray the Holy Spirit enlightens us to pass this on to our local fraternities.

—In our region, after reading the manual, we are planning to introduce it to our regional council and regional formation team. We hope to introduce it to the local formation directors at a weekend in the fall.

—Abundance of information to study, to embrace, to share with others "one brick" at a time. Some fraternities will immediately embrace and others will take more time, but all is doable.

—I AM A NEW FRANCISCAN AND HAVE SO MUCH TO LEARN!
I AM AT LEAST FEELING THAT I HAVE A DIRECTION TO TRAVEL.

—It is a shot in the arm and will help reanimate the local fraternities.

—I believe we will become more unified, stronger and much deeper spiritually if we use the manual.

—There is so much information to absorb, but I think this is all so doable — and way overdue. Now it's our turn. I just hope and pray that we can show the enthusiasm we saw here this weekend at our local levels.

—I think we will have to emphasize the wisdom of the "For up to now..." quote in getting people to accept that what we did in formation so far isn't nearly what we NEED. It was a good choice for the name.



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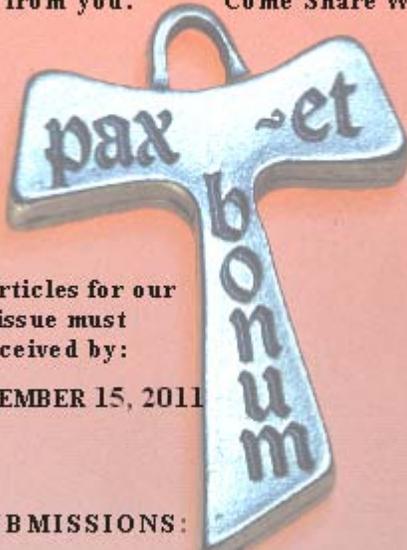
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46

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NOVEMBER 15, 2011

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- Rooms are \$89/night, single or double (some rooms may hold up to 4 sharing closely).
- Registration will be around \$300 (which includes all meals; actual to be determined soon).
- We encourage every fraternity that is able to send one person.
- Space is, however, limited to about 600.
- Information about how to register and reserve lodging will appear in the next *TAU-USA*.

**See you in Chicago! Peace and all good—Quinquennial Planning Committee
Clare McCluggage, SFO & Patrick Mendes, SFO, Co-Chairs**