



TAU-USA

Newsletter of the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States
Issue Number Forty-Nine ~ Winter 2005

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From painting by Antonio Allegri

*She gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes
and laid Him in a manger...Luke 1:7*

This
beloved
baby
Jesus
brought
the
Kingdom
of
God
to
earth.
He said,
"The
Kingdom
of
God
is
within
you."

Luke 17:21

Christmas Greetings to Our Franciscans Everywhere

From Carol Gentile, SFO

National Minister

May the light and love of our precious Lord Jesus fill your hearts and minds this Christmas season and always. May He keep you strong in whatever situation life finds you. May doing His will be your first priority so that His Kingdom may come on earth, as it is in heaven. As we reflect on His life, let us go forth with the courage to do what is ours to do in this life, and to love one another, as He loved us. Wishing you Joy and Happiness, Peace, and Love not only at Christmas, but every day of the New Year!

Love, Carol

TAU-USA

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TAU-USA is a vehicle of communication within the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States. It allows the National Fraternity to disseminate information to the regional and local fraternities and allows Seculars to communicate with one another throughout the country, thus fostering a sense of community nation wide. The deadline for submitting articles to the Editor, for the next issue of TAU-USA, is Jan. 15, 2006. Permission to copy all material printed in TAU-USA is granted, except where the copyright is specifically reserved to the author or artist. In cases where the copyright is not reserved, please credit TAU-USA and the author. Care must be taken not to distort the author's intent by adapting or editorializing the article. All correspondence sent to the editor becomes the property of the editor, and may be published in TAU-USA. Please state in all correspondence whether you wish to have your name withheld. Submissions to the newsletter are welcome. To increase the likelihood of your submission being printed, the following guidelines are offered: Please ensure that articles do not exceed 200-350 words. Shorter articles have more chance of being published. Please understand that all articles may be edited for length and clarity. Submissions received after the deadline for a particular issue will be considered for the following issue. Please send all submissions for possible publication in WORD format, as an e-mail attachment. All professed members of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States receive the TAU-USA without charge. It is the responsibility of the Regional Ministers to make sure that the addresses of professed members, who wish to receive the TAU, are in the Data Base.

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Minister's Insights

By Carol Gentile, SFO

"I see nothing bodily of the Most High
Son of God in this world except
His most holy body and blood."
"Hail His Tabernacle!"

St. Francis of Assisi

Woman of the Eucharist

"Mary is a 'woman of the Eucharist' in her whole life."

Pope John Paul II

As the year of the Eucharist comes to an end, if we wish to discover the richness of the Eucharist, we need to observe the profound relationship between the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Eucharist. Pope John Paul the II in the Encyclical Letter *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* says, "*Mary is a 'woman of the Eucharist' in her whole life.*"

Mary was asked to believe that the one whom she conceived through the Holy Spirit would be called the Son of the Most High. Upon arriving, the angel said to her: "Rejoice, O highly favored daughter! The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women." Luke 1:28 The angel went on to say to her: "Do not fear, Mary. You have found favor with God. You shall conceive and bear a son and give him the name Jesus." Luke 1:30

"When, at the Visitation, she bore in her womb the Word made flesh, she became in some way a 'tabernacle'—the first 'tabernacle' in history—in which the Son of God, still invisible to our human gaze, allowed himself to be adored by Elizabeth, radiating his light as it were through the eyes and the voice of Mary." JP II in *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*

"Blest is she who trusted that the Lord's words to her would be fulfilled." Luke 1:45



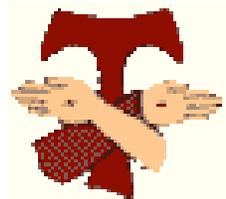
By Mariotto Albertinelli

Then Mary brought the child Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem. "When the day came to purify them according to the law of Moses, the couple brought him up to Jerusalem so that he could be presented to the Lord." Luke 2:22 Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother: "This child is destined to be the downfall and the rise of many in Israel, a sign that will be opposed and you yourself shall be pierced with a sword – so that the thoughts of many hearts many be laid bare." Luke 1:33-35

At the wedding feast of Cana, Mary says, "Do whatever he tells you." John 2:5

Mary heard from the mouth of Peter, John, James and the other Apostles the words that were spoken at the Last Supper, "This is my body to be given up for you. Do this as a remembrance of me." He did the same with the cup after eating, saying as he did so: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which will be shed for you." Luke 22:19,20

Pope John Paul II expresses the relationship this way in *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, "Mary is present, with the Church and as the Mother of the Church, at each of our celebrations of the Eucharist. If the Church and the Eucharist are inseparably united, the same ought to be said of Mary and the Eucharist...The Eucharist has been given to us so that our life, like that of Mary's, may become completely a **Magnificat!**"



Reflections of a Spiritual Assistant

By Fr. Kevin Queally, TOR

It is now getting close to 20 years since I first began my association with the Secular Franciscan Order. During that time I have been a local, provincial, regional, and national Spiritual Assistant. I have worked through Regionalization as a Provincial Spiritual Assistant. I have been part of the development of a region and I have even seen the International Fraternity in action, during my five and a half years in Rome. It may be seen as bold to list all of these experiences, but it is necessary, since I want to reflect as a Spiritual Assistant after some years of working with Secular Franciscans on many levels.

One of the joys of working with SFOs over the years has been seeing the growth of *awareness* and *responsibility* within the Order. The 1978 Rule was still in its implementation phase, as I got involved. I did not seek out the SFO. I was invited (“drafted” might be a better word, come to think of it) by a newly forming group to work with them. It is a unique fraternity and I always felt privileged to have worked with them for those few years. In many ways, I was part of the group, while being Spiritual Assistant. This formative experience has colored my work with the SFO all these years.

By growth of awareness, I mean that I have seen that the Seculars have taken ownership of their Order. One of my first experiences with the Order was being invited to speak at the 1987 Quinquennial in San Diego. Most of the speakers there were friars, and the exceptions were notable people who were not SFOs! That would not happen today. The Seculars are now used to taking the lead role in their own Order and the friars only need to assist. Our friar/assistant role is safe, but it is no longer dominant.

Another joy of working with the SFO has been to see the deep commitment to Franciscan life among the sisters and brothers. They are proud to be called *Franciscan*. The sisters and brothers are aware of what it means to be Franciscan and are very dedicated to living the Franciscan life in their homes, work places, and parishes. It is inspiring to see this and to know that the vision of Francis is being taken to the “marketplace” daily and in so many ways.

During visitations to Regional Fraternities, I have been inspired, also, to hear about the apostolic activities of fraternities all over the nation. It is a tribute to the Order to see how many are involved in the works of mercy. Needless to say, our heritage is

alive and well. The first members of the “Third Order” were also people dedicated to serving others, performing the “Works of Mercy,” especially for the poor, the sick and those most in need.

On the other hand, there are some things about the SFO that cause me concern. It is always surprising for me to see how many Secular Franciscans are not aware of the larger Order. I try to mention in Visitations, whether on the local or regional level, that we are an international Order. (I am currently a Regional Spiritual Assistant, as well as National.) There is so much information and it is so accessible today through the Internet that it puzzles me why, for example, at least one person in a fraternity does not subscribe to the free Internet newsletter offered by CIOFS at: <http://www.ciofs.org/sfo.htm> and then report to the fraternity what is happening internationally. Some wonderful things are happening. Even to read reports of international visitations is quite educational and thought provoking. It would be well if more of us were acquainted with the “higher” levels of the Secular Franciscan Order!

Along these same lines, I have heard things like, “What does the Region do for us?” and “Why should we pay fair share?” To me this is quite astonishing. Why would we be members of an Order, if we don’t want to support its activities? The Region conducts visitations, elections and the Regional Council must meet. The Regions that I have seen usually sponsor events for the members like retreats, gatherings and services, such as the Transitus. Regions also have obligations to the National Fraternity and must send the Minister of the Region to the national meeting and the Regional Spiritual Assistant to the Spiritual Assistants’ meeting. These are some of the things that Regions must do besides the many services for the local fraternities.

There is one other concern I would like to reflect on. It seems to me that there is too much legalism in the SFO. This is difficult for me to say, since in my own Region knows that I will read from the Constitutions or Statutes when a question comes up! Laws are good and it is important for things to be well ordered, but legalism takes the law too far. Jesus’ word is spirit and life. (John 6:63) We must concentrate on being good Franciscans, being compassionate and loving followers of Christ in the way of Francis. Sometimes I have seen compassion getting lost for trying to keep the letter of the law.

It has been a privilege to work with the SFO these many years. I hope I have been of some service and I hope that these reflections will invite the SFO to further growth as an Order as well as growth in *holiness*. May the Lord give you peace!



**Chapter of the National Fraternity
Of Secular Franciscans in the United States
September 20-26, 2005
University of St. Mary of the Lake
Mundelein, IL**

By Frances Wicks, SFO, Editor



Left to right: Fr. Kevin Queally, TOR, John Sanborn, Vive Minister, Elizabeth Allen, Secretary, and Patrick Mendés, Minister of host Region

NAFRA

The National Fraternity Council of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States, which is comprised of the Executive Council, Ministers from 31 Regions and the 4 members of the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants, conducted their annual meeting in Mundelein, Illinois. The gathering was hosted by Mother Cabrini Regional Fraternity. Regional Vice Minister, Stephanie Sormane, SFO, coordinated the event.

Moderators

National Vice Minister, John Sanborn presided in place of Minister Carol Gentile, who was unable to attend the Chapter due to a family emergency. Continuous dialogue by phone with Carol by John and Secretary Elizabeth Allen on the important issues was maintained throughout the meeting. Regional Ministers Barbara O'Neill, Elaine Hedtke, and Mary Lou Kreider moderated the meeting after the first business day. See the NAFRA Press Room Website at: http://www.nafra-sfo.org/pressroom/NAFRA2005_news.html for more details of the meeting events.

**Chapter Officially Opens with
Inaugural Mass**

Father Kevin Queally, TOR presided at the Inaugural Liturgy. In his homily, Father Kevin emphasized the element of surprise down through the ages, like...the surprise that God could raise up a Church ...like the surprise that the gentiles were responsible for rebuilding the temple. God's will unfolds His way through anyone! We are each called to do the will of God. Juan Lezcano was deacon and Vickie Klick was cantor for this Mass.

Welcoming

After Mass, participants were welcomed by John Sanborn and Patrick Mendés, minister of the hosting region. A social followed.

Liturgies and Prayer Services

The meeting days began and ended with prayer and liturgies. Morning prayers were led by the Commission Chairs in the chapel. All liturgies were arranged by Deacon Juan Lezcano and the host team. A special memorial service was held to honor our departed Secular brothers and sisters.



Anne Mulqueen

Ongoing Formation

A daily infusion of Ongoing Formation was provided by Formation Commission Co-chairs, Teresa Baker and Anne Mulqueen, before the start of business each day. The topics were: contemplation as opposed to monastic prayer, prayers of silence and an active meditation of the images on the San Damiano crucifix. For more details visit the NAFRA Website Press Room (See Press Releases from Bob and Mary Stronach, SFO Public Relations) at: http://www.nafra.sfo.org/pressroom/NAFRA2005_news.html

Socials:

Socials were enjoyed each evening. On one evening, a harp and piano concert was presented by Fr. Robert Hutmacher, OFM of Sacred Heart Province. Fr. Bob is the director of Chiesa Nuova, the Franciscan Center for the Performing Arts in Chicago. This gifted musician and composer warmed every Franciscan heart present, when he played selections from "The Francis and Clare Oratorio," that he wrote, honoring the 800th Anniversary of St. Clare, as well as some of his other compositions.

The day away included time at the Millennium park, Mass at St. Peter's in the Loop, and dinner at Berghoff Restaurant.

Reports:

Members of the Council were given time during the first business day to respond to the reports submitted to them for study weeks, prior to the meeting. The reports were prepared by the Executive Council, the CNSA, the International Councilor, the Commissions, the Committees, the Archivist, the Historian, Public Relations, TAU-USA Editor and the Vocations Director. Questions were few and this was accomplished in record time.

- The Demographics Report given by Deacon Juan Lezcano, International Councilor, showed a decrease in members, and an increase in the aging population.
- The CNSA Report given by Fr. Kevin expressed concern about spiritual assistance to the Regions, due to the decreased number and availability of the friars. At the CNSA, meeting in September the friars concluded that Franciscan religious or Secular Franciscans might need to fill in the gap by serving as Regional Spiritual Assistants. It was announced that Fr. Bart Karwacki, OFM Conv. will replace Fr. Steve Gross, OFM Conv. as a member of the CNSA.
- Archivist, Sharon Deveaux, reported on the collection and preservation of our records at St. Bonaventure University.
- Historian, Bill Wicks reported on collecting information for the history of the SFO. The history will be written and published within three years.



Teresa Baker

- The Financial Report was presented by Treasurer Dennis Ross.
\$1,000.00 has been sent to Catholic Charities to aid hurricane Katrina victims.
\$20,000.00 has been sent to Catholic Relief Services for tsunami aid in South Asia (mainly donations from regions)
\$2,000.00 has been sent to aid Sudan refugees.
The budget was approved with no increase in Fair Share amount. However, due to decreasing membership numbers, the approved budget was based on 15,000 members, rather than 16,000.

Action Items

- Official Proclamation – A pledge of support: Our nation has recently been exposed to two great tragedies from nature, hurricane Katrina and hurricane Rita. We the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States of America, meeting in Mundelein, Illinois, stand in solidarity with, and in support of, the U. S. Catholic Bishops’ initiative to reach out to those most affected by these hurricanes, especially the poor and those who have lost everything. We pledge ourselves to continue to pray daily for all those impacted and to assist our sisters and brothers in need.—National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States of America



Geographic Group in Session



Dennis Ross, SFO, Treasurer

- NAFRA Database – Lapsed Member Accounting
Definition of “Lapsed:” See National Statutes: (Art 18 Par 7) there is no category presently in the database to indicate that a member is “lapsed.” The database categories “withdrawn” or “dismissed,” are not appropriate for use for lapsed members. The Computer Committee will add a “mark as lapsed” option to the NAFRA database; in the meantime, for lapsed members, please do the following:
 1. Go to “Edit Profile”
 2. Change “Receive TAU-USA” to NO;
 3. In the “notations” indicate that the person is lapsed, and the date the entry was made.

This will enable us to correctly send TAU-USA only to active members (members share contribution) while maintaining records of lapsed individuals.

Open Forum and Geographic Meetings

Ministers spoke in Open Forum in response to items posted by the NAFRA council members early in the meeting. Open Forum Facilitators were Regional Ministers Kathleen White, Jim Hein, Deacon Tom Bello. There were breakout sessions for discussion by Ministers from geographically connected regions. Reports from these meetings were presented to the whole body. Details of the Open Forum and Geographic Meetings can be found on the NAFRA Website at: http://www.nafra-sfo.org/pressroom/NAFRA2005_news.html

A Group Picture



Stephanie Sormane, host coordinator, bottom right (in pink)

Regional Ministers Elected in 2005 before the NAFRA Chapter



L to R: Ken Beattie, Elaine Hedtke, Sue Nelson, Frank Carpinelli, Christine Imislund, and Jan Parker

The Computer Committee Members



L: Roger Raupp, Jr, Dan Mulholland, Vickie Klick, Bob Herbelin

The Meeting Room



Participants

Marge Stein, SFO

1924-2005

Past National Canonist and Parliamentarian

When the Saints Go Marching In...

By Anne Twitchell, SFO

She liked the San Diego Padres, the New York Yankees, the opera, New Orleans jazz, and the idea that we Franciscans were all headed in the same direction – following in the footsteps of St. Francis.

Marguerite Blackwell Stein, known to most of us as Marge was, as everyone one who knew her said, “a good friend” or “Marge helped me,” or both. When I met Marge, in 1980, she was working in the County Counsel’s office in Napa, California, had recently been professed, and was busily founding a new fraternity in Napa. Marge, then, became affiliated with the Milwaukee-based School Sisters of St. Francis earning a master’s degree in theology in Hales Corners, Wisconsin. She left the convent to study canon law at St. Paul Pontifical University in Ottawa, Ontario and, in 1990, earned a second master’s degree and went on to serve the National Fraternity, helping write the National Statutes. In 1994, she moved to San Diego working as a judge for the Diocesan Tribunal; returning to Northern California, she continued that work, this time for the Santa Rosa Diocese.

In 1997, Marge was nominated for the office of Regional Formation Director, but, to her amazement, was elected Minister of Blessed Junipero Serra Region (BJSR) where she not only served as Minister, but, again, became a founding member of another fraternity - this time in Santa Rosa. In her spare time, she took the Life-Giving Union course and, on February 18, 2000, was certified as a Lay Spiritual Assistant.

After Marge suffered a second heart attack in 2002, she moved to San Diego to be near a daughter. True to form, Marge did not stop working or serving her fellow Franciscan sisters and brothers in whatever way she could. In 2003, Marge was elected Vice Minister of Immaculate Conception Fraternity, St. Francis Region, and took on the Commission for Peace and Justice in that fraternity.

Continue on page 18.



An Angel Took Him

Vincent Buonassisi, SFO, a founding member of Holy Spirit Fraternity in Claremont, CA passed on to his eternal reward on July 22. He was professed in 1932, and served as Formation Director in the fraternity. It was Vincent’s idea for the fraternity to donate Easter food baskets, containing turkeys for the poor, each year and he was the one responsible for transporting baked goods and gifts to the annual fraternity bake sale.

Vincent was a man of peace and profound love for the poor. He had the great satisfaction of managing the local St. Vincent De Paul Society thrift store for many years. He would wake up early in the morning, to drive to Riverside once a week to buy a truck load of food at 10 cents a pound, and spend the rest of the time giving it away.

People loved to be around Vincent, but with dogs it was a different story. Dogs would stop chasing the mailman to start chasing Vincent.

He is survived by his wife, Judith, who was also his best friend. Judith says, “An angel took him!” and she is at peace.

**Seventeenth Quinquennial Congress
July 3-8, 2007
Franciscan University at Steubenville, Ohio**



*Without you, the
family is incomplete.*

T

*A sense of community will
make them joyful and ready to
place themselves on an equal
basis with all people,
especially the lowly for whom
they shall strive to create
conditions of life worthy of
people redeemed by Christ.
(SFO Rule, Article 13)*

Contributed by Anne Mulqueen, SFO

**How to Contact
National SFO Leaders**



DO NOT use the National office address in Cincinnati. That address is for legal purposes ONLY. There is no one there who can help you. To contact a national Secular Franciscan leader, use that person's home address. It is listed in the National Directory and all regional ministers have a copy. To report a change of address write to: Robert Herbelin SFO, 21010 Union St, Wildomar, CA, 92595 or rherbelin@juno.com and please list your fraternity's name.

Public Relations

Bob and Mary Stronach, SFO, PR Chairs have completed the first edition of The NAFRA Public Relations Manual.

It is now available under the "Meetings and Resources" section of the NAFRA Website: http://www.nafra-sfo.org/meetings_and_resources.html

For excerpts on the NAFRA 2005 Chapter held in Chicago, go to the NAFRA Website at: http://www.nafra-sfo.org/pressroom/NAFRA2005_news.html

**National Work Commission Team
Membership Recruitment**

Sally Haddad, the newly appointed National Work Commission Chair, is soliciting applications from Secular Franciscans, who would be interested in serving as a team member of the National Work Commission.

The selected person(s) will begin the one-year term in the fall of 2006. This term would be renewable annually for up to 3 years. An applicant must:

- Be an active Secular Franciscan who can provide a copy of Certificate of Profession.
- Be passionate about the Work Commission.
- Be willing to communicate his/her passion about the Work Commission to other people.
- Be able to attend the annual National Work Commission team meeting, which will usually take place shortly after the NAFRA meeting in the fall.

If you meet the above criteria and are interested in applying, please send your resume and a copy of your certificate of profession by March 1, 2006 to: Sally Haddad, SFO, 309 Savage Hill Road Berlin, CT 6037 (860) 828-0878 sallydhaddad@sbcglobal.net

**JANE DE ROSE BAMMAN, SFO
IS THE NEWLY APPOINTED NATIONAL
APOSTOLIC COMMISSION
COORDINATOR**



Jane DeRose Bamman, SFO

**NATIONAL COMMISSION
CHAIRS' MEETING**

By Jane DeRose Bamman, SFO
janedbsfo@msn.com
505-254-0512

Did you know that the National Commission Chairs: Formation Commission, Youth/Young Adult Commission and the Apostolic Commissions: Ecology, Family, Peace & Justice, and Work try to meet at least once a year as a group? The Chairs meet to plan for upcoming events, to exchange ideas, and to offer support to better serve the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States. Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM serves as Spiritual Assistant to the National Commission Chairs' group and typically participates in these meetings. This year, to accommodate work schedules, the meeting took place on Friday, September 23, during the NAFRA meeting.

It was a challenging year to be away from the NAFRA discussions, because there was lively discussion on the budget for the commissions. The Chairs did manage to accomplish a few things. The most significant were: what the Chairs would like to address in the TAU-USA articles for 2006; ways to reach out to coordinate better with the Regional Commission Chairs; possible re-structuring for the Apostolic Commissions and how, then, to still be available for assistance to the Regions; and how the Commission Chairs have shared information to sensitize people to the meaning and usefulness of

the Commissions on all levels. We welcome feedback, comments and suggestions from our brothers and sisters and look forward to a year of fruitful exchanges. Peace and all goodness! Jane

Jane DeRose-Bamman has been Acting Apostolic Commission Coordinator, since shortly after Carol Gentile left that position to become National Minister. She resides in Albuquerque, NM, and is a member of St. Anthony Fraternity in Our Lady of Guadalupe Region. Jane was professed in 1995. She works hard and enjoys power walking.

COMPUTER COMMITTEE MEETING

By Vicky Klick, SFO
National Computer Chair

The NAFRA Computer Committee held its second annual, face-to-face meeting during the NAFRA meeting. The primary work of the Computer Committee is to support TAU-USA through the NAFRA online database and related efforts, and to maintain the NAFRA Website. By meeting at the same time as NAFRA, we can get to know the people we serve, with whom we otherwise only interact by email. We also hear first-hand about opportunities to make the Website and database more effective.

Significant items discussed by the Computer Committee this year include ways to make it easier to maintain the names and addresses in the NAFRA database. One improvement we plan to make is to provide a report format that can easily be generated for each fraternity in a region. By sending *two* copies of this report to each fraternity minister with the annual report form, the minister can mark one up and send it back while retaining one for his or her records. (It is much easier to make updates to the database using a marked-up roster than to compare a new list with an old one.)

Other topics discussed include handling of lapsed members (a category created since the NAFRA database was developed, so we need to add it to the system), improved handling of officer titles, a new Webpage for the Multicultural Committee (to be developed), and prioritizing of the "to do" lists for both the Database and the Website.

During the NAFRA meeting, we also were able to post items to the Press Room section of the Website, in real time, as Bob and Mary Stronach prepared them. One of our priorities for the Website is to continue to add more timely information to the Press Room, as it becomes available.



By Marcella A. Bina, SFO
National Ecumenical Committee Chair
Marcella_b@core.com

THE BONDING PROCESS

“That all may be one...” has been the focus of our SFO Ecumenical Committee since its beginning. This focus and mission of the Committee seeks to bring an “authentic ecumenical spirit and understanding to the ongoing renewal of the Secular Order.” Thus, the committee pursues efforts to educate all of our Franciscan brothers and sisters to ecumenical awareness.

This theme was carried through when the Committee met during the National Fraternity’s annual meeting in 2005, with representation from the Episcopal Franciscans by Fr. Masud Ibn Syedullah, TSSF, by ecumenical talk tables at mealtime, with a display table having brochures, photos, prayer cards, and miscellaneous literature, and through the committee’s annual report, which highlighted accomplishments from the past year. One of the most successful of these has been the short articles in TAU-USA. Feedback from these articles enables the committee to share ideas with others.

This same ecumenical focus was continued in early October, when the SFO Ecumenical Chair attended the annual Episcopal Franciscan (TSSF) chapter meeting. Time spent in prayer, in sharing of information and ideas, all worked together to strengthen the bonds, which join these two Franciscan communities.

THREE WAY BONDING

St. Francis House in New London, CT was the setting for the second annual meeting of the Joint Committee on Franciscan Unity, bringing together equal representation from the SFO, the TSSF (Third Order Society of St. Francis), and the OEF (Order of Ecumenical Franciscans). The meeting took place during the week of August 8, 2005, when four of the six committee members gathered to share in common prayer, bible study, retreat time, and meeting agenda.

Time spent at St. Francis House is an ecumenical experience all its own. The House is “a place of prayer, a house of hospitality, and a center for peace and justice ministry in New London, CT.” The people who live in the House constitute “an Intentional Christian Community, modeled in part on

the Catholic Worker.” Rev. Emmett Jarrett (TSSF) and his wife, Ann, live in St. Francis House and coordinate the activities. When available, their two children, Sarah and Nate, assist.

We were welcome to participate in a peace vigil at the Soldiers and Sailors Monument in downtown New London, which took place at this time. The vigil commemorated the 60th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, Japan. The demonstrators held candles and peace signs.

As for the meeting, the four committee members shared their ecumenical journeys in a heart-filled manner with honesty and respect. They studied each Order’s official documentation regarding: Baptism, Vocation, Charism, Christocentric Nature, and Prophetic Voice.

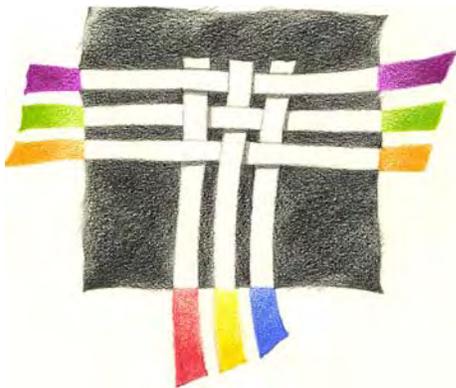
In an effort to further Franciscan Unity among the Orders, the Committee worked on the details of an Ecumenical Conference to be held in February of 2006. Participants for that Conference will include the six Joint Committee members (the SFO members are Marcella Bina and Jean D’Onofrio), along with six invited guests from each of the three Orders represented. The focus will be “To evangelize and promote ecumenism among our Franciscans of diverse traditions.”

SECULAR FRANCISCAN
ARCHIVES
NATIONAL FRATERNITY
By Sharon Deveaux, SFO
National Archivist
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Last Aug. and Sept. were very exciting months for the Archives. In Aug, we received 102 boxes from St. John Baptist Province in Cincinnati, which contained information preceding Regionalization and *a great find*, an early document with a membership directory entry dated 1815. The boxes are all now safely in their new home at St. Bonaventure University.

Regional Ministers shared with me at the NAFRA meeting that an important archival concern to them is humidity. (The damp and moist conditions of high humidity can cause mold and mildew to grow and dry, low humidity can cause paper to become brittle and crumble. Both of these problems can result in serious damage). These and other preservation topics will be included on the upcoming archive Website. In the meantime, please send me your questions.

MULTICULTURAL
COMMITTEE



SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER / U S A

**TODAY'S CHALLENGE—
A MULTIETHNIC CHURCH**

By Sonia Bernardo, SFO
National Multicultural Chair
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At our meeting in Chicago on Sept. 23, 2005, we talked about multiculturalism and the challenge ahead. We recalled the early followers of Jesus, who implemented His vision for “a house of prayer for all the nations.” If we claim to follow Jesus Christ and to have inherited the gospel of the early Christians, we should exhibit that same vision. “The vision for multiethnic churches is not that people should leave behind their unique cultural heritage, but that we should be able to celebrate diversity and to allow the blending of our differences to give birth to something new.” Noel Castellanos, Founder and President of the Latino Leadership Foundation, [Christianity Today, April 2005](#)

According to one author, there are two metaphors that many have discarded because they say it does not reflect reality. First is the “image of the *melting pot* because ends up becoming a soupy mixture that has no distinctive flavor. The second one is the *salad bowl* with all the different vegetables of different flavors, but... the dressing was still creamy ranch and it smothered everything else.” Soong-Chan Rah, Multiethnic pastor, Urban-ministry-focused [Christianity Today, April 2005](#) He says we need to start looking for other models that point to what we hope will become a multicultural society. Are we trying to smother everything with one culture, so that everybody is the same flavor? Or are we looking to boil everybody into one unrecognizable mass?” He challenges us to answer these questions honestly, and to hold up “integration” as the ideal.
Continue on Page 18.

New Orleans and Katrina

By Bill Wicks, SFO

I never did believe the saying, “You can never go home.” Frances and I traveled home about once a year. New Orleans had an essence, a spirit that even though some other family lived in my old house in the garden district, I was always able to go home. I moved to California to work and raise a family, however, it will never be my home. We will be returning home next February, and I will find out if Katrina stole my city from me. New Orleans has survived other catastrophes: the cholera and yellow fever epidemics – where the dead were placed outside the houses and carried away by horse drawn carts to be buried in mass graves. The city survived that; she will survive Katrina.

The ninth ward where the poor, mostly African Americans live, suffered the most. St. Mary of the Angels, a Franciscan parish connected to St. John the Baptist Province, is located there. Friar Tony Walter, OFM describes *the* day from the second floor of St. Mary of the Angels school. “Early in the morning (Monday), water starts pouring into the streets, quickly reaching perhaps 10 or 12 feet. On the school playground, higher than the street, the water “makes a basket” at the basketball net. Later, the radio says that a levee, or whatever, broke, letting Lake Ponchartrain’s water, salt water, spread through New Orleans. Water floods the first floor of the school. The wind howls. The rain blows sideways...That rain comes right through closed windows. The floor gets slippery from water. The ceiling drips. At times the howling wind roars louder still. Windows in the school start breaking, cracking like guns, shooting sharp edges of glass into rooms. Waves out in the street whip up into white edged crests...Boats (mostly little row boats) start bringing more people to the St. Mary of the Angels school building.” Fr. Tony and the other Friars were eventually evacuated. The Poor Clare sisters of New Orleans fared somewhat better. They evacuated and were welcomed by the Poor Clare sisters at the Brenham monastery in Texas, and have now returned home. Many, Seculars in New Orleans and along the Gulf Coast suffered horrific damage to their homes. All, except a few from the ninth ward in New Orleans have been accounted for. After Katrina, New Orleans will never be the same – but it will still be New Orleans.

Quotable Quote

It isn’t for the moment you are struck that you need courage, but for the long uphill climb back to sanity and faith and security.

Anne Morrow Lindbergh

The Transforming Power of The Eucharist



The Power To Serve

By Teresa Baker, SFO
NAFRA Formation Co-chair
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October 3, 2005, the women of the Tabernacle Society gathered in our parish hall for their monthly meeting. Their purpose is to care for the sacristy and the sanctuary areas of our church. As they gathered, I wondered whether or not they were aware of their medieval counterparts, Sts. Francis and Clare.

The Fourth Lateran Council, 1215, called for the care of the churches and the sacred species. St. Francis took upon himself, and the brothers, the responsibility for carrying out this call of the Council: *Moreover, at one time he wanted to send throughout every region some brothers who would carry many beautiful and decorated pyxes. And wherever they would find the Body of the Lord carelessly lying around, reserved unworthily, they were to place It fittingly in them.* 2MP 65

To the places where he could not send friars, St. Francis sent letters. To the clergy, he wrote: *Let all those who administer such most holy mysteries, however, especially those who administer them illicitly, consider how very dirty are the chalices, corporals and altar linens upon which His Body and Blood are sacrificed...*

...Wherever the most Holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ has been illicitly placed and left, let It be moved from there, placed in a precious place and locked up. . . LtCI 4, 11

St. Clare was also known to have aided in this campaign to make the churches, in which the Eucharist was consecrated, worthy. In her Process of Canonization, it is noted: *She spun (thread) so from her work she could make corporals and altar linens for most all the churches of the plains and hills around Assisi.* Proc 1.11

I wonder if those gathered for the meeting of the Tabernacle Society that morning were aware of the wonderful Franciscan tradition they are carrying on?



The Power To Serve

By Jeanie D. McLees, SFO
Youth/Young Adult Commission
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It is clear that we as Seculars are called to assume positions of servant leadership within our Order. Why do we need leaders and what do we hope to accomplish through leadership? Francis and his brothers did not rebuild the Church alone. They did it with the collaboration of the Poor Clares and other members of religious and secular institutes, but, especially, through the Secular Franciscan Order. From our Franciscan history, we can see that what was done fulfilled an obligation to a need. This need is still present in the Church today.

When Francis was rebuilding San Damiano, he called out to the lay people to help him. This involvement was, perhaps, the beginning of what would become the great movement, which is known today as the Secular Franciscan Order. We are called now, as then, to help rebuild the Church, not with stones, but with Gospel lives.

We need leaders for all areas of our lives. Seculars have three outstanding examples of leadership: Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Ss. Francis and Clare of Assisi, true followers of Christ and co-founders of our Order. When we try to discern our call to leadership as Secular Franciscans, Jesus, Francis, and Clare are our ideals, guiding with word and example. *Jesus modeled leadership!* He taught values that were very different from the prevalent ones of the times, such as, *"The last shall be first,"* at a time in history when children, at best, were just, plain ignored. Christ called the young to his side, and used their honesty and purity as examples in His parables.

Franciscan Youth /Young Adults of the SFO-USA had an exhibitor's booth in the Vocation Area of the National Catholic Youth Conference attended by 20,000 youths and 4,000 adults on October 27-30, 2005, in Atlanta, GA. Kathy Taormina, SFO, National Y/YA Chair was in attendance.

To read the complete article, go to:

<http://www.franciscanyouthusa.com/formation/index.html>



The Power To Serve

By Sally Haddad, SFO
NAFRA Work Commission Chair
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When we receive Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, we receive the power to become like Him. He said, "I came not to be served, but to serve." (Matt 20: 28) What did Jesus mean? We need to remember what Jesus left behind when He came to earth—an existence of glory and delight in heaven. During His time of service on earth, He accepted an enormous amount of suffering, because we needed salvation, and were completely incapable of saving ourselves.

We, Secular Franciscans, are given many chances to come, not to be served, but to serve, in our daily work and in our lives. For example, my husband and a friend stained the wooden deck for a handicapped woman. They performed this task because the deck truly needed to be stained, and this woman was completely incapable of staining the deck herself, and she would not have been able to pay someone to perform that task.

I too, have been the recipient of kind acts from people, who were in service at their work place, and have experienced the presence of God through them. One experience in particular taught me never, under any circumstance, to ignore the indicator lights on the dash-board of my car. Several years ago, I owned a Chevrolet Cavalier, and, one day, the indicator for electrical problems was lit up on my dashboard. I ignored it. Two weeks later, while driving to work, I stopped for a traffic light. When the light turned green, my car would not move under any circumstance, so I walked a quarter of a mile to a diner, hoping to find a public pay phone. There was no public phone, but the workers allowed me to use the diner's phone. I called AAA, and was told that a tow truck would arrive shortly. As I was leaving the diner, one of the workers offer to call the police for me. I thanked that person and left the diner to return to my car.

Within five minute a policeman arrived. He switched on the blue lights on the police car, which protected my car from being smashed by some driver, who

would not be expecting find a stationary car at the traffic light. The policeman stayed with my car until the tow truck arrived. The car was taken to our favorite mechanic and, even though his schedule was enormously full, he repaired my car that morning, and I was able to arrive at work by noon. I was very thankful to God for the employees at the diner, the receptionist who answered the phone for AAA, the policeman, the driver of the tow truck, and our mechanic. Every one of these people transformed an extremely stressful event into a peaceful, minor one through their work service.

The Power To Serve

By Diane Halal, SFO
NAFRA Family Commission Member



How does the Eucharist on Sunday influence our family life on Monday? We are inclined to think of Eucharist in terms of Communion, and I wonder if we give enough attention to the Eucharist as the source of our strength for mission and service to our various families. When children first receive Holy Communion, it should be with their families, and there should be family discussion on the importance of the Eucharist and how it is the food which helps us to serve others.

Many parishes have Perpetual Adoration and there is very poor participation at the hours during the middle of the night. An exciting idea is to send an invitation to the children who have just received their First Holy Communion to have a "Date with God." The children would have a special invitation to come visit with God, with their parents, for an hour in the middle of the night. The children could even wear their pajamas. I am sure they would remember going to church in their pajamas for a long time to come, and hopefully they would realize what a blessing it is to spend quiet time with God.

To find a web site for Eucharistic Adoration near you, go to www.therealpresence.org.

The Power To Serve

By Carolyn Colburn, SFO
NAFRA Peace & Justice Chair
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After Jesus took a towel and tied it around his waist, he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and dry them with the towel. Then he said to them, *"Do you realize what I have done for you? You call me teacher and master and rightly so, for indeed I am. If I, therefore, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do."* (John 13:4-15)

Francis admonished, "Let the one to whom obedience has been entrusted and who is considered the greater be the lesser and the servant of the other brothers . . . We must never desire to be above others, but, instead, we must be servants and subject to every human creature for God's sake." Armstrong, Hellmann and Short, *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents, Volume I*, page 48

When we serve others, especially those who are the most poor and wretched, we recognize the innate dignity of the other on whom we see the face of God.

Think of the poorest person that you have served in your Secular Franciscan peace and justice work. In what ways had that person's human dignity been denied?

There are fundamental rights that flow from the dignity intrinsic to all persons. Those rights need to be part of the social structure so that all can have them.

Charity serves to ease the pain of human dignity denied. Justice seeks to repair the social fabric so that fewer need our charity. As members of the lay faithful, Secular Franciscans are in the service of both charity and justice.

National Ecology Recruitment:

If you are a Secular Franciscan from the Southeastern U.S. (South of the Mason-Dixon line and west to Texas) with a keen commitment to the "Stewardship of Creation" and if you feel called to serve on the National Ecology Commission, please contact Fred Young at (906) 249-2026.

The Power To Serve In Stewardship

By Edward L. Feiler SFO
NAFRA Ecology Commission Member
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"As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace."
Peter 4:10

As Christ's disciples we must make mindful, solid decisions, manifested by actions, regardless of the cost to ourselves. Starting with conversion, our commitment manifests itself by our entire way of life. In the thirteenth century, Saint Francis gave the following rule of life: *"Let all the brothers, however, preach by their deeds."* Chapter XVII, Rule of 1221 Our very self must be committed to God.

Stewardship expresses discipleship, giving us the power to change how we understand and live our lives. Practicing stewardship, helps us to recognize God, as the originator of all life. *"The Lord's are the earth and its fullness; the world and those who dwell in it."* Psalm 24:1 We know we are the recipients and caretakers of God's numerous gifts. We are grateful and thankful for what we have received and are eager to use our gifts out of love for God and one another. The gifts God has blessed us with require thoughtful, prayerful care in their use.

The other day I was talking about stewardship with a friend who regularly reads at Mass. For her, it is a privilege to be able to serve God by reading at Mass. Until then, I never thought my help at the local soup kitchen was, also, a privilege. Jesus tells us *"Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me."* Matthew 25:40 As Mother Teresa said *"We should not serve the poor like they were Jesus. We should serve the poor because they are Jesus."* Mother Theresa By feeding those who are hungry, we are feeding Jesus. Now THAT'S a privilege!

"The promotion of the practice of stewardship is important for the mission of the Church and for the spiritual well-being of each individual Christian. Everyone benefits from the sacrificial gift one makes of his time, talent, and treasure."

(Pope Benedict XVI)

Classic Franciscan



About My Father's Business...

By Julia Pearson,
SFO Human
Interest Editor

“Why would God make the world so beautiful, and then put you in a cell?” This is the straight-

forward logic of my friend Secular Franciscan, a beautiful woman who will be called “K.” K was born in 1934, the only child of a hard-working, unchurched, couple in Camden, New Jersey. K says she always “had a feeling to find God.” She attended church with a friend, Joanne, around the corner.

Her mother had two close friends, who K called Aunt Margaret and Aunt Marie. Once when K’s mother and the “Aunts” were curling each other’s hair, K asked Aunt Marie who started her church. Being a Catholic, Aunt Marie told her that the beginning of her church went back to Jesus Christ. “That’s for me!” replied K. Once, while visiting Aunt Margaret, who was also a Catholic, K went to Aunt Margaret’s sister’s church in Philadelphia to help with “redding up” — dusting and such. When K got nearer the front altar, the altar lights went on. K and her companion responded at such a wonder. The “still, small voice” in the eleven-year-old’s heart was guiding her to her own spiritual home. K began looking for her church, a Catholic church, in Camden. There were several, each of a different ethnic flavor. Mount Carmel served the Italian section of Camden. K remembers Easter at the Polish parish, where women brought baskets of food to church to be blessed. Sacred Heart parish was made up primarily of Irish and German Catholics, and was the closest to K’s home. On Sundays, K began to leave her friend JoAnn at the neighborhood church and would continue the much longer walk alone to Sacred Heart. JoAnn honored the girlhood pledge not to tell K’s parents. K has vivid memories of people going into the church with their missals, of the priest with his back to the people, as he elevated the host. K

says she knew right then that God was immediate, there with them.

One Sunday, when a snowstorm blanketed Camden Street with deep drifts, K set out for mass, following the coal wagon so she could walk in the tracks of its wheels. Mr. Mac O’Keefe, the driver, asked her what she was doing. When she replied she was going to Mass at Sacred Heart Church, he invited her to sit on the front seat of the wagon with him, delivering her to the church itself. Inside, Mass was cancelled due to the storm! A nun in a black habit was the only one present. In the convent, over hot chocolate and doughnut holes, the nun discovered this little girl wanted to be a Catholic. She took K to a Franciscan convent nearby. K remembers the Franciscan nun as tall and beautiful, dressed in a brown habit and sandals. Conversation begun at the Franciscan convent continued for many Saturdays. K went through her gray catechism book with the sister, and told her parents about wanting to be a Catholic, astounding them that she had been walking to Sacred Heart Church by herself for well over a year, even in the iciest of winters.

One momentous day, a priest with a very stern expression came to K’s home and asked to speak to her parents. “Am I in trouble?” she asked him. Smiling, he said, “No, you’re not in trouble.” He then told her to go play, and that he needed to speak to her mother and father. K was called to join the adults later, and the priest asked her what the bells meant to her in church. She replied that it was a holy time. He then asked her what the elevated Host was, and she said it was Jesus with them. The priest sent her upstairs to her room again. When she returned later, her father was crying. Her father was a sick man, dying with the slow progression of cancer, throughout his body. Concerned for her dear father, she asked him why he was crying. He simply told her, “I am a Catholic.” The priest had just heard his confession, and the little girl watched as her father’s heart overflowed with the gift of tears. In May of 1947, K was baptized and then received her first communion. Being a tall girl for her age, she chose the confirmation class with adults rather than the children, when given the option.

In adulthood, marriage brought the blessings of two daughters. They grew and married, bringing two loving and gentlemen into K’s life that she could love as sons. The happy restlessness in her soul, always seeking God in the quiet places of her heart, led K to study and pray, attend retreats, and to even be with the Discalced Carmelites for two years.

Continue on page 18.



NEWS & VIEWS

Reports-Information-Recommendations-Reflections For spiritual assistants at all levels

By Lester Bach, OFM Cap

IMPORTANT!

REVISED HANDBOOK CORRECTION!

The revised *Handbook for Spiritual Assistance to the SFO* is available from Barbo-Carlson Enterprises for \$14.50 plus S & H.

If you have a copy, note the following insertion on **Segment A, page A13**. Toward the bottom half of the page, there is a change in #3 of the recommendations from the annual meeting of Provincial & Regional Spiritual Assistants. This change was made at the meeting of Regional and Provincial Spiritual Assistants in Seattle, WA, September 15, 2005. The text should read, as follows with the insertion underlined:

3. *We affirm our preference that a Regional Spiritual Assistant (RSA) should be a friar. Qualified Secular Franciscans and Franciscan religious should be trained and mentored to collaborate with and even replace the friar Regional Spiritual Assistant.*

The *Handbook* may have typos etc. which do not change things substantially. This correction is important as we continue to search for Franciscans to serve as Regional Spiritual Assistants.

CNSA has been dealing with this issue for several years and recognizes the reality that we face. There are fewer friars to serve the SFO. Our training program for spiritual assistants has been a part of CNSA planning since 1996. The *Life-Giving Union* book is available from Barbo Carlson for \$8.00.

PLAN AHEAD

2006 Meeting for PSA's & RSA's

The annual meeting for Regional and Provincial Spiritual Assistants will be held at the Franciscan Retreat Center in Easton, PA, from September 19, 2006 (evening) to September 22, 2006 (breakfast). Please mark your calendars. Further information will be sent to you in due time.

CHANGES FOR CNSA



Stephen Gross, OFM Conv

After a long and gracious service, **Steve Gross, OFM Conv** completed his term on the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants. It would be impossible to list Steve's many contributions during his service on CNSA. One regular gift to us was to push us to think "outside the box." Thank goodness the gift remains available to us. We will happily use that resource. His dedication to the SFO is obvious. That dedication continues. Thank you, Steve!

Steve will be replaced by **Bart Karwacki, OFM Conv**, who has many years of experience with the SFO. Bart is known by many in the region he serves as Regional Spiritual Assistant. He has done fine work with his brother Conventual friars in enriching their Franciscan knowledge and dedication. We are happy to welcome Bart to CNSA.

Members of CNSA are appointed by the Conference of Provincials of each of the branches of the 1ST Order. The TOR provinces take turns in appointing friars to serve on CNSA. The term of this appointment is three years. Total time of service is limited to twelve years.

RANDOM REFLECTIONS

...Provincial spiritual assistants need to take special care in appointing spiritual assistants to local fraternities. I have received resumé's of people with marvelous training for serving in a parish. Some

considered this to be sufficient for serving as a local spiritual assistant as well. In one case, there was a presumption that reading one book about St. Francis was enough to prepare for service to the SFO.

PLEASE, rejoice at such training, but require training in our Franciscan spirituality as well as knowledge of the role of a spiritual assistant. *Life-Giving Union Course* (and acquaintance with the *Handbook for Spiritual Assistance*) needs to be completed before appointing a non-friar as a spiritual assistant. We have a serious responsibility to appoint *suitable* and WELL PREPARED people to that role. Even friars need to read the *Life Giving Union* book and have a copy of the *Handbook for SA* upon assuming the role of local spiritual assistant.

...With the reality of fewer friars, and provinces withdrawing from particular areas, it happens that the *altius moderamen* becomes difficult for that province. If it seems realistic, the Provincial Ministers (prompted by the Provincial Spiritual Assistant) can transfer the *altius moderamen* to another Province if both Provincials agree. The goal is to enable the 1ST Order/TOR to better serve the local fraternities. (cf. *Statutes for Spiritual & Pastoral Assistance to the SFO* – Art 6.2)

...Though it is not required by constitutions or statutes, good collaboration requires that Provincial Spiritual Assistants consult the regional or local councils of the SFO (who make the request) when appointing Spiritual Assistants at their level. This collaboration assures everyone that there is common agreement on the appointment. (cf. General Constitutions, Art 91.3)

...If there is only one regional spiritual assistant in a region, that person represents the 1ST Order/TOR with fraternities in the region. When the regional spiritual assistant makes a pastoral visitation of fraternities belonging to a particular province, it is expected that a copy of the post-visitation letter will be sent to the Provincial Spiritual Assistant of that Province.

...*The Statutes for Spiritual & Pastoral Assistance to the SFO* give the general purpose of spiritual assistance: *The purpose of spiritual assistance is to foster communion with the Church and with the Franciscan Family through witness and sharing of Franciscan spirituality, to cooperate in initial and ongoing formation of secular Franciscans and to express the fraternal affection of the religious towards the SFO.* Art 2.3

...CNSA looks forward to the annual meeting of Provincial and Regional Spiritual Assistants. Your presence is important. Our discussions allow us to collaborate in improving our service the SFO. Do your best to attend our next meeting in **Easton, PA – Sept. 19 to 22, 2006.**

...At all levels we address the issue of integrating people of other rites, cultures and languages into our regional and local structures. This is not a simple process. Complete integration may take years to accomplish. It begins by developing relations. Avoid immediately imposing structures on people. Spiritual Assistants on every level contribute to the process by **listening well** and responding to the needs of people who seek integration. Each culture is different. Appreciating these differences is important. At the same time though, structures are needed, but they ought not hinder the growth of relationships which lead to communion among us. Be as patient and loving as Franciscans are expected to be.

...Structures at all levels of our Franciscan life need regular assessment to be assured that they support the vision of Francis and Clare. Sometimes they are a hindrance rather than a help. They may overload people with their demands. Our goal is to have structures that enable us to live the Franciscan vision. When structures hinder the vision, we change them or let them go. It takes work and prayerful reflections, but it is worth the effort. Good structures serve the vision. Poor structures become more important than the vision. Something precious is lost when that happens.



*We want to see lay ministry strengthened today so that by staying close to one another, the faithful might remain strong. Among the many organized apostolates today, the most effective are those that harmonize everyday life and everyday faith. The point here is that organizing as such, is not our goal! Infusing the world and everyday living with the spirit of Christ is our goal, and we organize to get that done. **Therefore, any organized effort must have that mission in mind or it is not valid!***

Vatican II in Plain English - Wm Huebsch – Vol 3 – Page 31
Decree on the apostolate of the Laity – Paragraph 19

Marge Stein continued from page 7:

In 2003, Marge was elected Vice Minister of Immaculate Conception Fraternity, St. Francis Region, and took on the Commission for Peace and Justice in that fraternity. She also served as president of the residents' council at Villa Bonita, where she last resided.

Marge attended every NAFRA meeting from 1986 through 2003, every Quinquennial from 1981, and every Western Week of Community held during the past 22 years. As Regional Minister of BJSR, Marge hosted NAFRA at San Damiano Retreat Center, Danville, California and a Western Week of Community at San Juan Bautista, California.

I last saw Marge in May 2005, in Oakland, when we met for lunch. Marge was attending the wedding of one of her daughters and while we were meeting as friends, I took along my yellow legal pad – she had taught me well – and, as true Franciscans, our lunch served our brothers and sisters as she gave me sound legal advice that I followed.

Just a few notes about Marge's journey before she became a Secular Franciscan. Marge was born in Evanston, IL October 1924 and graduated from Cathedral High School, New York, at the age of 16. In 1946, after attending Hunter College, a business school, she enlisted in the US Navy and earned certification as a Pitman shorthand reporter, a skill she used at Courts Martial Boards. After World War II, Marge was given an early discharge to work as a civilian for the Department of the Army at the War Crimes Tribunal in Nuremberg, Germany.

A court reporter by day, supporting her five children after her divorce, Marge decided she wanted to "be a lawyer, because she thought she was a lot smarter than some of the lawyers she saw," went to night school, and, in 1966, was the lone woman among 15 graduates of the initial class of 47 at University of San Diego law school. At the time, her five children ranged in ages from 9 to 16.

Marge is survived by her three daughters, two sons, and nine grandchildren. She is missed already by many Secular Franciscans.

Multicultural continued from page 11:

The Multicultural Committee agrees that integration *is* the answer. Our true Franciscan charism will be witnessed and experienced through integration.

How do we live out our culture through our Franciscan identity? Our Franciscan call is to respond to Christ's love, to recognize our unity with

others. This sense of solidarity is our SFO commitment to oneness in Christ.

Mexican American Cultural Center states, "Culture is not only how we are, it is who we are. It is our history, our ethnicity, how we think about our families, who we include in our families, how we speak, when we speak, how we think about God, how we relate to each other and how we relate to the stranger. We are born into a culture and learn what is right, according to our elders. We are formed by our culture. Where we are, we bring our culture. Every culture contains gifts and riches."

Difference is a gift, a present to be made public, so that it can be shared. If gifts are not offered in that way, if you are not a gift to others or not able to give yourself to others, then God's love is not burning bright. Jesus is not, then, the Light of the world that He wants to be. Share the gifts that you are, and in sharing who you are as a present, be willing to accept, as a gift, the presence of those who are different from you in anyway. "Intolerance of other people because of their race, religion, or natural origin is ultimately a denial of human dignity. No one is better than another person because of the color of their skin or the place of their birth. What makes us equal before God, and what should make us equal before each other, is that we are sisters and brothers of one another, because we are all children of the same loving God who brought us into being." Most Rev. Donald Wuerl, NCCB

And so, we should celebrate our diversity and our solidarity, recognizing that we are children of the same father, brothers and sisters in Christ, different, but not better, not worse.

My Father's Business continued from page 15:

"But the Franciscans enjoyed being with God," she reflects with smiles and warmth in her voice. She loved her time of formation with the Secular Franciscans and was professed in 1991. She had come full circle from her earliest lessons with the Franciscan nun. K truly believes that "Francis was a man who served God the way God told him to."

Having an artist's heart just like the Little Poor Man, K writes down her happy prayer-poems. In one titled "In Silent Awe." is the line: "My life is my prayer." At 71 years, her prayer is now one of thanksgiving for her four grandchildren, and for having a loving 91-year-old half brother in her life, a surprise, only God knew about. K sums up her days: "I just have a good time with Christ."

New Life in the Present Moment

By Joseph M. Smith, SFO

If we have not learned to “*live in the present moment*” we are missing so much in life. Each day we are given a new perspective to really look at our lives and make a choice of how we will live these moments in time. If we spent even five percent of our daily time reflecting on our relationship with Jesus, our lives would be dramatically different. We could not help but want to become the best that we could be, and dedicate our lives to help others, and use our talents to the best of our abilities.

Today’s life styles are so demanding, especially when we are younger and are trying to “get ahead.” Getting ahead though, makes many people very unhappy because they feel unused and “going through the motions” of existing, but not living.



Where do we fit in and how do we become more productive and obtain feelings of belonging and making a difference? We need to stop occasionally and “get off the merry-go-round.” We can do this by making a personal retreat at least once a year. It is amazing how this simple act of getting out of our daily routine can make us look more closely at the direction in which we have been going and new directions we would like to aim towards.

Richard Gere played a character in a recent movie entitled, *Shall We Dance*. His character was burned out after twenty years of doing the same job over and over again. He had lost his zeal for life. When he spotted a dance studio on his train ride home from work, he took a chance and began dancing lessons. Everyone in Gere’s movie family noticed that he seemed happier and more fulfilled. Stepping out of our routine and doing something different can be a life saving event in an otherwise mundane existence.

As Franciscans, we can emulate Francis by looking at life each day from a new perspective, and challenging ourselves to reach out to the lepers of the world. *Sometimes that leper is our own existence.*

We hate who we have become. We want to change, but are afraid of the unknown! This is the perfect time to risk losing our security to do the things that will open us up to God’s will.

John Bradburne, SFO

By Celia Brigstocke

John Bradburne, Third Order Franciscan, mystic, poet and friend of lepers. Born in England in 1921, his father was a Church of England parson. After wartime service on the Indian subcontinent, he became a perennial pilgrim, never at home in the world, not even in his native England. Restless wanderings led him through Europe to the Holy Land, to a succession of religious communities after his conversion to Catholicism, and ultimately to Zimbabwe, where he found the Mutemwa Leprosy Settlement.

There he tended a flock of 80 leprosy patients with loving care for ten years, until his murder by guerillas on September 5, 1979, during the war for independence. At his Requiem Mass, three drops of blood (later it was revealed that he had a great devotion to the Trinity) fell from his coffin in front of many witnesses. Although the coffin was opened to seek an explanation, no cause was apparent. However, an oversight was revealed: John had not been clothed in the Habit of St Francis as had been his wish, this was then corrected.

A moving memoir, written by his close friend, and Bradburne’s vast output of poetry give rare insight into the mind and character of this extraordinary man. These, as well as the astonishing happenings during his funeral service, make it clear that here was a man singled out for sanctity, marked by special charisma. Since his death there have been many signs of his sanctity: reports of miracles, claims of cures, as well as many answers to prayer. More important, many have turned back to God through John’s extraordinary example. There is strong backing for his Cause for beatification worldwide.

*...God’s love within you is your native land.
So search none other, never more depart.
For you are homeless save God keeps your heart.*

By John Bradburne, SFO

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By Sandy Neal, SFO
mark-sandy@att.net

Mother Cabrini Region

Joe Rice, SFO, minister of St. Pascal fraternity, the oldest fraternity in Mother Cabrini Region, will celebrate his 40th Profession Anniversary on November 14, 2005. He is following in the footsteps of his parents as well as those of St Francis. His parents were Seculars too!

The Region hosted the National Chapter Meeting in Mundelein, IL from Sept. 20-26, 2005. Eighty Seculars attended.

St. Francis Region

Over 200 Seculars attended the annual Regional gathering on October 8, 2005, in La Habra, CA that featured Vinal Van Benthem, SFO, authoress of the book, On the Way to Work, that makes a meaningful connection between Sunday and Monday, the spirituality of everyday life and the spirituality of work.

On August 20, 2005, a multicultural conference was held at the St. Francis Korean Center in Torrance, CA. The theme of the conference was "Many Faces—One Family." In St. Francis Region, seventeen of the twenty-nine canonically established fraternities and twelve forming fraternities are considered multicultural. The languages spoken are Korean, Vietnamese, Spanish, Tagalog, Malayalam, and English.

On July 30th, twelve members of San Lorenzo Ruiz Emerging Community went on a mission trip to Tijuana to help the needy. They distributed food and clothing supplies to several churches and plan to do this again.

Brothers and Sister of St. Francis Region

The Robert Murtha Family received the Regional Family of the Year Award. Robert is a member of Immaculate Conception Fraternity, Jonesboro, GA and serves on the fraternity council. He is the Youth/Young Adult Commission Chair. He always goes the extra mile, when he sees a need. Robert suggested the fraternity's Calvary Refuge Center apostolate, and his family fully supported this and other fraternity apostolates.

Lana Aumer, SFO, Regional Family Commission chair, presented the award to this deserving family at the Annual Regional Gathering in August.

Lady Poverty Region

The Regional Gathering will take place on May 20, 2006, at the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse in Baden, Pa. The Lady Poverty Retreat will take place on September 15-17, 2006 at Villa Maria Retreat Center. Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM will be Retreat Director.

Roger Gill, SFO has been appointed Regional Councilor.

Fr. Solanus Casey Region

St. Mary Frances Fraternity in Bristol, CT celebrated their tenth Anniversary on Aug. 26. "We are Seculars with individual apostolates who have grown, with the grace of God and St. Francis, into a family," states Minister Pauline Casey, SFO.

Five Franciscan Martyrs Region

The profession ceremony of Maria Teresa Nicotra, SFO, took place on September 17, 2005 at St. Michael the Archangel Fraternity, in Tampa, FL

Holy Trinity Region

An All Commissions Day Conference was held at St. Clement Parish Center in St. Bernard, Ohio, in June.

The Region's Peace & Justice Commission sponsored an "International Day of Peace, Education and Prayer Service," in Cincinnati, Ohio, on September 21, 2005. Fifteen people participated.

"Little weeds"

The gift that keeps on giving...

By Muppy Marko
As dictated
to M. Marko, SFO
Feature Editor



My name is Muppy, and I'm a bellyrubbaholic (*hm? Wrong crowd? Gollyned! Ah-kay.*) (Ahem.) Hello. My name is Muppy, and I'll be your guest columnist this time out. Mummy thought that since it's the season for gift giving, I might say a few words on the subject. Now, you're no doubt thinking, what can a cat say about gift giving? Like, what's a cat got to give?

Well, look at St. Francis the Sissy (*hm? Oh, my! Sorry 'bout that.*) (Ahem.) Of Assisi. Since he's a saint, it's a given that he was very generous. (Selfish people don't get canonized.) But St. Francis' bank account was the same size as mine. His wardrobe was a ratty little robe; mine's a crappy little collar. He didn't own any property; I don't own any property (well, not technically: the condo's in Mummy's name). Yet he was constantly giving. Just like me.

Of course, I have an edge. I'm an animal, and animals are hard-wired. We can be only what we were meant to be. I'm the Muppier I'll ever be. I couldn't get any Muppier if I tried. Even though it may appear as if I have some say in the things I do – for instance, it may seem to be up to me as to when I play or eat, how long I run dementedly up and down the hallway, or whether I sleep at the foot of the bed or on Mummy's face. But even these things are pretty much determined by instinct.

You humans, on the other hand, are constantly upgrading (or downgrading), enhancing, adding to, taking away from your software. So you can, if you're not careful, end up something entirely different from what you're meant to be. And what's that, you ask? Well, think about it. Whenever a human has a baby, another human comments on the baby's being a gift from God. And they're right. We're *all* gifts from God. But, whereas animals never stop being gifts, well, humans seem to outgrow it sometimes.

When Mummy and I have quality time, there's a

lot of rubbing, nuzzling, tickling, cuddling, and stroking. We literally bask in one another's presence. We are, at those times, *being gift* to one another. Don't get me wrong: I enjoy prezzies (especially the paper and ribbon they're wrapped in), and I do like my snackies. But, I really think one of the best gifts that Mummy gives me is herself. And I return the favor whenever I can.

Francis used to say that he was what he was in the eyes of God, no more, no less. (Or something like that. I'm a cat. I can't read.) In God's eyes, he was a gift to the world; that's what God meant him to be. And he was true to his being a gift. He had nothing to give anyone that would require wrapping; yet he was constantly giving – of himself. That's what you're all called to do. Because there is no statute of limitations on being a gift from God. And you're not a seasonal gift, either. You're the perfect gift no matter what the holiday or occasion. You're multi-purpose: you have hands to help, arms to hug, lips to smile, mouths to say kind things, ears to listen, hearts to love – and no batteries are needed! How cool is that?!

So next time you're thinking of buying someone a gift, keep in mind that that's not the only thing you have to offer them. (Just make sure you don't ever become the sort of gift that makes someone wish they had the receipt so they could return you! That's *not* what God had in mind when He gave you to the world.)

From the two of us to the all of you:
Merry Ho-Ho
Happy New-New –
Pax et Bonum –
God bless!
M&M



God Bless the Poets with Yellow Birds, Purple Flowers and The Double Rainbows ...

Transformation

By Anne Twitchell, SFO

Knocked from our horse,
blindness undone,
Errors of the past confronted.
Sorrow, regret;
alas, past no way undone.
Conversion experienced;
character changed.
From persecutor to zealot,
From egoism to concern,
From self to others,
to those in need.
Service the immediate goal;
Heaven on earth the dividend.

Jesus

By Joan Gallagher, SFO

When I look into your eyes,
I can see my entire world
unfolding.
The Glory of Your love
energizes my entire being.
Thoughts of You stir my heart
to feel it's deepest passions.
The Glory of Your Love will
live forever in my soul.
The joy of being near You
causes life to rise
from the deepest recesses
of my inmost self.
My spirit speaketh
from its depths,
Do not fear your love,
but live in gracious
receptivity
to have day-to-day unfolding
more and more loves
Most wondrous gift
bespeaking,
Finding true love
waiting at your door.
Do not destroy your love,
but tenderly nurture all that is
In loving moment glimmer
kisses of the soul.
I will be your Love forever.

Weeds Growing On the
Roof

By Vinal Van Benthem

There are weeds
growing on the roof.
Planted by the wind –
watered by the rain –
called into being
by God's own hand –
looking to no man
to tend them.
Sturdy harbinger of spring,
Sentinels of summer.
Bountiful harvest for birds
In asphalt desert.
Food and shelter for insects
Buffeted by city winds.
Grasping at life
Through tar paper cracks.
There are weeds
Growing on the roof!

Compass of the Heart:
Earth

By Gregory Davis, SFO

I listen to the birds sing
to the wind blow
to the small animals laugh.
I wake up to rosy dawns
feel the warmth of the sun
all day long
and go to sleep
under rusty dusks.
I smell the fresh grass
of the fields;
I taste the perfume
of the celestial night
facing the whitest star;
I am blessed
by the touch of raindrops
that wash
and nourish me.
I store these memories
inside of my petals
so that I can give them to one
of God's children: My real
beauty is inside, not outside.

Daily Bread

By Richard Hurzeler SFO

His Holy Hour a continuing
battle to fend off sleep
A baffling call to see beyond
the White Disk—so hard to
focus.
He *prays* with beads,
words, texts;
mind struggles
in a forest of doubts,
distractions as fatigue pelts his
weary eyes like waves of dust,
he threads
through a taxing watch.
Meanwhile at work, his wife,
numbed by repetitive tasks,
gossipy neighbors,
remembers when
he said: *I love you*
and feels a surge of power.
All because of prayer.

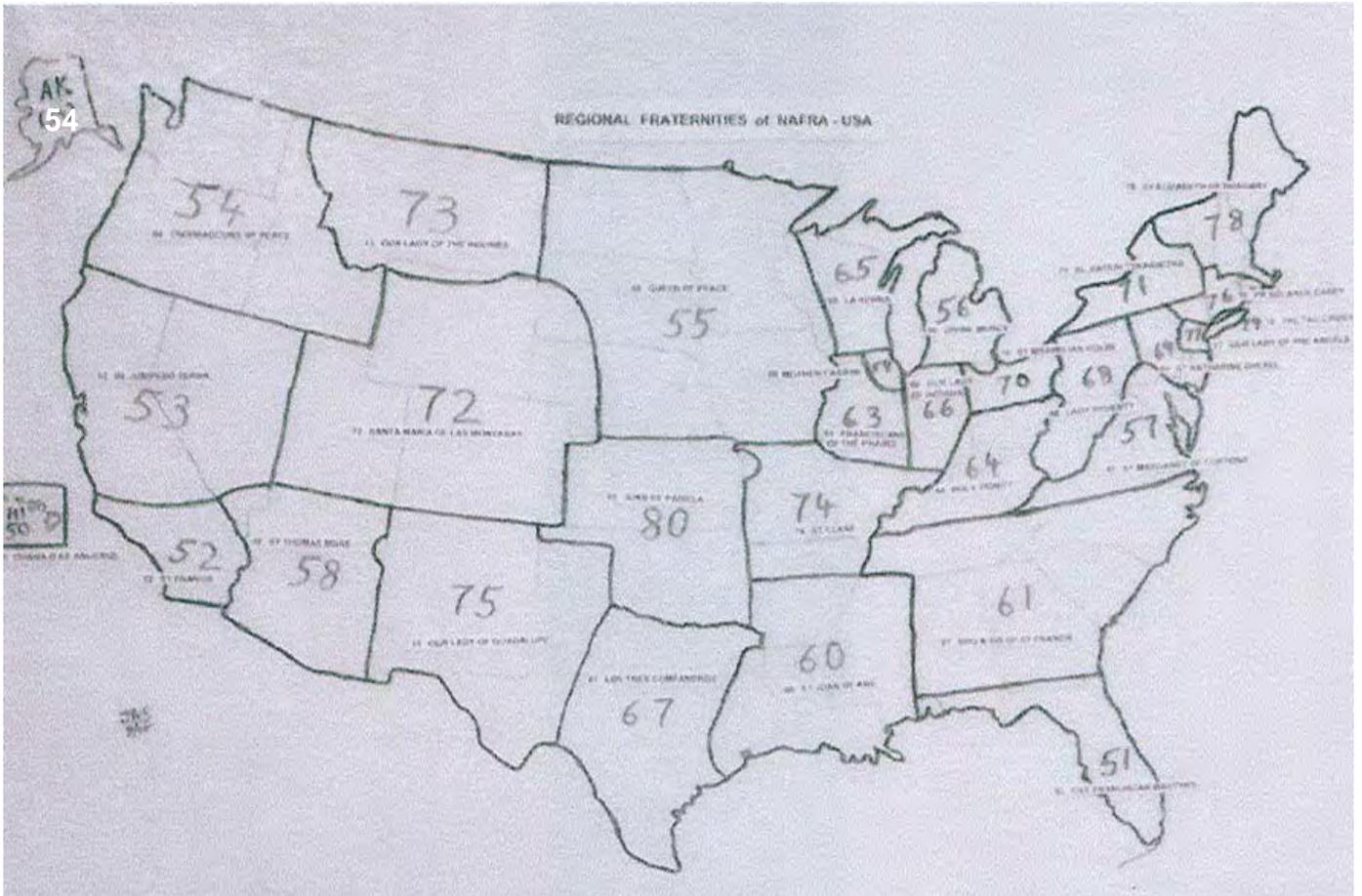
Yoked

By Richard Hurzeler SFO

In Church she aches—
cold and alone.
Some people greet her—
Stranger.
It's push and pull,
hello and goodbye.
When everyone leaves,
she freezes in solitude.
In the dark void
she murmurs,
"God."
A light casts its beam
on the large cross
with tortured,
gnarled body.
Slowly the warmth
of Grace
seeps
into her soul.

REGIONAL FRATERNITIES OF NAFRA - USA

Contributed by John Sanborn, SFO



REGIONS & NUMBERS

Geographic composition – Appendix A National Statutes

50	OHANA O KE ANUENUE	66	OUR LADY OF INDIANA
51	FIVE FRANCISCAN MARTYRS	67	LOS TRES COMPANEROS
52	ST FRANCIS	68	LADY POVERTY
53	BL JUNIPERO SERRA	69	ST KATHARINE DREXEL
54	TROUBADOURS OF PEACE	70	ST MAXIMILIAN KOLBE
55	QUEEN OF PEACE	71	BL KATERI TEKAKWITHA
56	DIVINE MERCY	72	SANTA MARIA DE LAS MONTANAS
57	ST MARGARET OF CORTONA	73	OUR LADY OF THE ROCKIES
58	ST THOMAS MORE	74	ST CLARE
59	MOTHER CABRINI	75	OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE
60	ST JOAN OF ARC	76	FR SOLANUS CASEY
61	BRO & SIS OF ST FRANCIS	77	OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS
63	FRANCISCANS OF THE PRAIRIE	78	ST ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY
64	HOLY TRINITY	79	THE TAU CROSS
65	LA VERNA	80	JUAN DE PADILLA

Observations and Recommendations of the Fraternal and Pastoral Visitors to the National Fraternity of the US Part II

By Encarnación del Pozo, SFO, General Minister &
Fr. Michael Higgins, TOR, General Assistant
Michigan, October 24, 2004

Continued from last issue:

10. Spiritual Assistance

With respect to the permanence of some Spiritual Directors, we must state that, at times, the responsibility for this situation falls on the lack of commitment of the laity in assuming their proper responsibility in the animation and guidance of our Order. The Assistant is a member of the Council with full rights, with the exception that he or she lacks the right to vote on economic issues and in the elections. With patience and gentleness, but also with firmness and decisiveness, counting on the active collaboration of the Conference of National Assistants, you must confront this issue.

We exhort the National Executive Council to promote a meeting with the presidents of the Conference of Provincial Ministers of the First Order and the TOR with the purpose of elaborating on the criteria for Spiritual Assistance to the SFO in the United States.

11. Preserving of documents in local fraternities

It is the responsibility of the National Executive Council and of the Regional Councils to maintain archives at each level - local or regional - so that they may be conserved adequately. The minister is not the depository of the documents - this is the duty of the Fraternity.

When the documents of the establishment of a local Fraternity are not available, it is possible to request a certification accrediting the canonical establishment of the fraternity from a major superior, which includes the confirmation of the establishment of the same.

12. Fraternity Life

It is necessary to take care and to value the participation of brothers and sisters in the life of your fraternity. It is an essential element of our vocation and an indispensable requirement of our belonging to the Secular Franciscan Order (CC.GG. 30.2) and must be very well cared for from the time of initial formation as an essential requirement in order to be admitted to Profession (CC.GG. 40.3). We are called to live the Gospel in fraternal communion (CC.GG.3) and

to offer that experience to the Church as a principal service (CC.GG. 100.3).

Upon completing the fraternal and pastoral visitations the National Executive Council and the Regional Councils must keep this is field of special responsibility very much in mind.

13. Collegial behavior of the Councils

We strongly recommend to you that Councils at all levels behave as a body. It is a call especially directed to the regional Ministers as a requirement of your service. I urge you to live and promote the sense of co-responsibility of all the members of the Council and that you act in a collegial spirit of the same. It is your duty to be vigilant because this attitude should be the norm of behavior in all local fraternity councils. The best method to do this is through your own testimony. Unilateral decisions lack legitimacy.

The ministers at every level should in no way act individually. Is it our responsibility to promote the spirit of participation of all the members of the Council if we want our service to respond to the service prescribed by the Rules and Constitutions?

14. Presence in the particular (individual) Church

Fraternities have to be present in their respective dioceses. Presence and collaboration with the secular Apostolic Commission is necessary. Even though we have as "Ordinaries" the major superiors (Superiores Mayores) of the First Order and the Third Order Regular - no matter how we refer to apostolic action - we must integrate ourselves within our dioceses. It is in our local churches that we develop our vocation and accomplish our apostolic commitment. We must try to participate in charitable and social activities of our respective dioceses with a spirit of service and be available to collaborate with other ecclesiastical groups by making ourselves present as Secular Franciscan Fraternities. In this way we can enrich the church with our charism.

The same is true of our parishes. But we should never forget that we act there as Franciscans. We represent our fraternities and are sent and sustained by them.

Brothers and sisters, we thank you deeply for your fraternal attitude and welcome, your availability to help us in carrying out our service, your gestures of love and fraternity, the intense moments of shared prayer, of joy and of work. Only the Lord can truly thank you for how much you have offered us. We raise our gratitude to our Father, giver of all good, and to Saint Francis, for each and every one of you, praying from the Lord that He bless you all, your families and your fraternities.



YOUFRA & World Youth Day



SPECIAL REPORT written by Kathy Taormina, SFO, photographed by Kathy and Youfra, and designed by Bob & Mary Stronach, SFO.

'We arrived to singing and dancing, and the welcoming arms of Fr. Ivan Matic, OFM, International Spiritual Assistant for Youth.'

By KATHY TAORMINA, SFO
National Youth/Young Adult Chair

The theme for this 20th World Youth Day was from Mathew, ***"We have come to worship Him,"*** thus the setting of Cologne, Germany, where it is believed that the relics of the Three Wise Men reside.

We were welcomed at the Cologne airport by Fr. Georg Scholles, OFM, Germany's National Spiritual Assistant, and a band of SFOs and Youfra. We were then loaded onto a bus for the two-hour drive to Vossenack, the site of the Youfra gathering. We rode with Franciscan Youth from Brazil, Mexico, Great Britain, and Poland. The weather turned rainy, but it didn't dampen our spirits: we arrived to singing and dancing, and the welcoming arms of Fr. Ivan Matic, OFM, International

Spiritual Assistant assigned to youth. There were 170 participants from 21 countries. Those countries were: Mexico, Canada, Slovenia, Madagascar, Poland, Great Britain, Puerto Rico, Brazil, USA, Chile, Spain, South Africa, Portugal, Italy, Philippines, Kenya, Croatia, Germany, Belgium, Sri Lanka and Ecuador.

We found a classroom and unpacked for our next four days' stay. We shared our classroom with the delegates from Canada, Puerto Rico and Great Britain. We, as Franciscan Youth, were asked to carry the Franciscan charism into this event, so in that spirit, we packed less and brought sleeping bags to serve as our beds. We were even blessed, in "perfect joy,"



Fr. Ivan Matic, OFM

with showers so cold that I could see my breath while showering! I felt Francis and Clare smiling down on us!

The opening Mass was a "pilgrimage liturgy" which took us around the grounds. We started Mass outside with the opening song and prayers. We moved to the front, near the flag pole, for the readings and there we had

the “mixing of the nations’ soils.” The Gospel was read on the threshold of the chapel and then for the rest of the Mass, we proceeded inside where it was warm and dry. The evening ended after midnight with the Feast of All Nations, a celebration of introduction and song, with each country carrying its flag.

DAY 2 found us in a lecture entitled, “Franciscan Youth, Situation in the World,” followed by an assembly on “Franciscan Youth Reality.” These were led by Xavi Pozo Ramos, OFS, CIOFS Youfra Councilor, Fr. Ivan Matic, OFM, and Lucy A. Almirañez, OSF, CIOFS Councilor from the Philippines. Xavi told us that the local experience is the most important formation, where we need to have a *Jesus Experience*. He stated that a “happy brother (sister) equals an available brother (sister)!”

“Good Youfra,” he said, “has education (formation) availability and vocation! ...Youfra itself is a vocation!” He mentioned that Youfra members who profess in the SFO may be good candidates to be Lay Spiritual Assistants to the Youfra. After the afternoon Mass, we were separated into small groups to discuss the document, “Youfra, a Way of Franciscan Vocation.” They told us how we are “called to be” as opposed to a vocation which is “the way.” that Youfra is a “progressive discovery.” Youfra has its own formation structure, in which its main three points *must* be Human, Christian, and Franciscan. Every participant was asked to sign up for a one-hour time slot for all night Adoration.

DAY 3 brought us together for the lecture, “Adoring Jesus as Saint Francis Did,” by former International Spiritual Assistant to youth, Fr. Ben Breevort, OFM Cap. He touched on several main points, including: “We Adore You, O Christ,” “We Adore You in a Spirit of Truth,” “Contemplation of Saint Francis” and, finally, “Sharing



An opening ‘pilgrimage’ mass began outdoors and ended inside.

our Experiences..” He stated that we must “accept the other as the other is!” We then broke into three-person groups for discussion. In the evening, we were treated to an after-dinner Mexican fiesta, complete with mariachis, dancing, games, and even “wedding” ceremonies. Our USA youth now have Italian “spouses!”

DAY 4: Immediately after breakfast, we packed and boarded a bus to travel to Moresnet, Belgium for a pilgrimage Mass for the Feast of the Assumption. The small chapel was packed to overflowing with youth and locals to sing Mary’s praises. After a bus ride of games, fun and singing, we arrived at the Franziskanerkloster in Dusseldorf. The local parish fed us lunch and after World Youth Day

(WYD) registration, we separated to our individual group lodgings to commence the rest of WYD. That evening we were reunited with the fifteen others of our group who had been involved in the Days of Encounter, while we were at the Youfra meetings. If I had to sum up the International Youfra Meeting in one word, it would be “MUSIC”! We constantly sang. We sang prayers, grace, youth music, oldies, and even Beatle tunes. For four days, our lives were filled with music.

The word “pilgrimage” came into its own as soon as we arrived at St. Josef’s Parish in Dusseldorf. We were escorted to a school about a mile away, and shown the two classrooms that we would call home for the next six days of World Youth Day. The floors



Panel leads discussion on “Franciscan Youth Reality.” From left are: Fr. Ben Breevort, OFM Cap, former International Spiritual Assistant to youth; Xavi Pozo Ramos, OFS, CIOFS Youfra Councilor; Fr. Ivan Matic, OFM, International Spiritual Assistant to youth, and Lucy A. Almirañez, OSF, CIOFS Councilor from Philippines.



Some 170 Franciscan youth from 21 countries gathered for prayer, discussion and song before joining the Pope for World Youth Day.

were linoleum and the restrooms were a hike down two flights of stairs and outside across the courtyard. The blessings came when we found that we did have hot showers and that some of the Youfra groups were housed in the same school!

Our two days of English-speaking catechesis were held at St. Rochus, only a 20-minute bus ride away. Our youth ministered as altar servers on the second day.

We heard from Bishop Terry Pendergast, SJ, the Archbishop of Halifax, Canada, a 61-year-old Jesuit. He spoke on reconciliation and the Eucharist. Priests were available for reconciliation and many of us were blessed by the grace of the sacrament. We learned that we all need an attitude change. We do not have to change our personalities, but we need to “see” with the eyes of the Spirit. Paul stated in the day’s readings, “Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind...” In the evening we returned to the Franziskanerkloster in Dusseldorf to participate in the Franciscan Fiesta. We reunited with our new Youfra friends for an evening of singing and dancing. We met other USA youth from Washington, DC and the Brothers and Sisters



U.S. Youfra delegates meet with Fr. Ben Brevort, OFM Cap, following his talk on “Adoring Jesus as St. Francis Did,” and cavort with other U.S. Franciscan youth in Dusseldorf (below).



of St. Francis Region, and joined to take a photo. We closed the evening with a new play entitled, “Francesco, und der tanz mit dem tod,” a Spiritual performance by German Youth.

The next day we were blessed by the Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese

of Sydney, Australia, Bishop Anthony Fisher, OP. He is a young bishop of 45 and a Dominican. He spoke on the Three Magi, and on vocations. He related that most traditions show the Three Wise Men being three different ages, presenting three different gifts,



The Youfra gathering was full of music, and singing and singing and singing.

and possessing three different insights. He stated...

The first wise man is shown old; with a long beard, he presents the Christ Child with gold, for he sees Him as a King. The second wise man is middle-aged, with a short beard; he presents the Child with frankincense because he sees Him as a Priest. But third wise man is young and clean-shaven; he presents the child with myrrh, the "spice of death," for he knows that this is the child who will die for us! The youngest wise man is the only one who "gets it"!

Imagine that... a young adult who sees the true Christ and comes to worship Him.

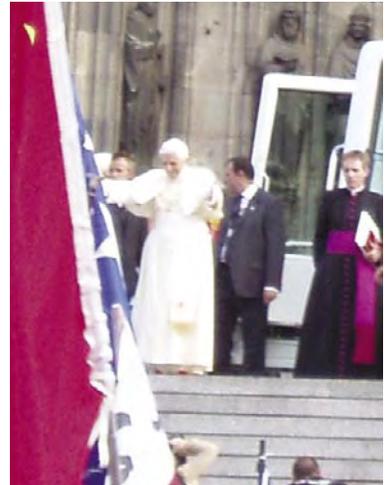
Bishop Fisher's statements on vocations also struck a chord with us. He

spoke of how many of us feel "unworthy" to "be something", but he told us that "you don't have to be perfect, you just have to arrive," that all vocations are a progressive discovery. On this day, we were blessed with a chance to see our new Pope, Benedict XVI. He arrived at the Cologne Cathedral in his pope-mobile, greeted the youth, and then went inside to pray. We waited, and saw him again as he left to go to the bishop's residence. The sight of the youth's faces at seeing the Pope is one of the main reasons why I do this. It is unforgettable to see the emotion in their youthful eyes!

The Cologne Cathedral pilgrimage was about a three-mile walk, with prayers, scripture readings and banners with quotes from the World Youth Day saints all along the way. It was a

prayerful walk that led us through the Cologne Dom (Cathedral), and past the famous golden reliquary housing the actual relics of the three Magi. This pilgrimage ended across the bridge with lunch in a beautiful park. I sat back and watched the youth engage in trading items and was amazed how the different languages held no barriers for any of them. I also discovered that 16- and 17-year-old boys, who do not sing at Mass in the USA, not only have singing voices, but also have great rhythm and can dance... imagine that!

This was also the day that we were showered upon from heaven... literally! What a blessing to be in a crowd of thousands, cheek to cheek, be rained on, and then have the train station close on you, when you are just twenty feet from the door. As we Franciscans



Under the Stars & Stripes are the spires of the Cologne Cathedral, where well-perched U.S. Franciscan youth got a glimpse of the Pope as he stopped to pray.



Americans pose for a group photo in Dusseldorf with their "Who's Your Papa" T-Shirts, while the young man at right reveals the full message. BELOW: Pilgrims mobbed Cologne Cathedral, inside and out, then walked along the Rhine River and over the bridge.



would say, "What perfect joy!"

The next two days are still a blur. We left St. Josef's at 7:30 a.m., traveled by the underground, by train, and then by foot to Marienfeld, the place for the outside vigil and followed by the closing Mass with the Pope. Our allotted space was full, so we had to search for a place to lay our sleeping bags. I kept thinking, "And there was no room in the inn." We finally got settled and the trading began again in earnest. We found some of the Youfra groups again and visited for a while and walked and sang and walked and rested.

Close your eyes for just a moment and try to imagine a hillside leading up to an altar. The hillside is ablaze with hundreds of small vigil candles. As dark approaches, vigil lights, hundred of thousands of them, begin to come alive with flames all over Marienfeld. Soon, the entire field is covered with them. This was the setting for the vigil with Pope Benedict XVI. Prayers, psalms, songs and testimonies by youths from around the globe made up the evening's offerings.

The candlelight vigil was prayerful, but we had to concentrate to hear the translation to English on our small transis-



Umbrellas were kept at ready for those moments when heaven poured forth liquid sunshine.

tor radios. We prayed for our clothespin prayer requests by the light of our candles. (To help pay for the trip, the youth "sold" colored clothespins, to which donors could attach



Candlelight lit up a hillside.

prayer requests.) We then slept, or tried to, side by side with an estimated one million youths and chaperones. The night found us cold and wet with dew, but in good spirits. In the morning, six of our youths registered to be altar servers, and they now have the memory of ministering with the Pope by assisting with Communion.

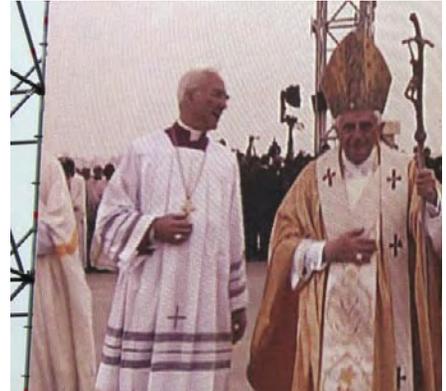
In his homily, at the closing Mass of World Youth Day, Pope Benedict XVI stated, **“Anyone who has discovered Christ must lead others to Him. A great joy cannot be kept to oneself. It has to be passed on.”** His words were met with applause as he spoke in five different languages. He then announced the next World Youth Day would be in Sydney, Australia in 2008.

We were told that we all needed a “Jesus Experience” to truly make our faith our own. I fervently pray that, in this one event in the lives of the youth from the USA, Jesus was felt, recognized, and invited into their lives. Sometimes I feel odd about all the wild youth things that I get into, but as Jeremiah stated, “it becomes like fire burning in my heart” and I must do them. I thank you that I was chosen to accompany this group to Germany. My heart and soul are filled with many blessings.

I want to thank you, the Secular Franciscan Order of the USA, for all your support, well-wishes and prayers for this World Youth Day. We could not have accomplished this pilgrim-

‘Anyone who has discovered Christ must lead others to Him. A great joy cannot be kept to oneself. It has to be passed on.’

– Pope Benedict XVI



Clergy and altar servers process up the hillside for mass with the Pope (shown at right on a huge outdoor TV screen).



American Franciscan youth squeezed onto a German hillside with an estimated one-million participants, singing, praying and sharing the thrill of hearing the Pope’s message first hand.

age without you. But please do not let your support of our youth stop there. Always keep them in your prayers. Remember that vocations are not just to the religious life, but also to chaste

single living and loving Christ-centered marriages. The youth are not the Church of the future; they are the Church of today! The youth need your support... please be there for them!

LEADER OF PILGRIMS

The author, Kathy Taormina, SFO, was the adult leader in charge of 21 World Youth Day pilgrims from her home parish in Minnesota, plus Youfra delegates who included a young professed SFO and several SFO candidates ranging in age from 17 to 24, on the 12-day, 9,600-mile pilgrimage, The Youfra delegates were: Ashley Hautman, 20; Elizabeth Taormina, SFO, 24; Lori Taormina, 21, and Timothy Taormina, 17.

IT'S A DOG'S LIFE



IF A DOG WAS YOUR TEACHER, YOU WOULD LEARN STUFF LIKE:

- When loved ones come home, always run to greet them.
- Never pass up the opportunity to go for a joyride.
- Allow the experience of fresh air and the wind in your face to be pure ecstasy.
- Let others know when they've invaded your territory.
- Take naps.
- Stretch before rising.
- Run, romp, and play daily.
- Thrive on attention and let people touch you.
- On warm days, stop to lie on your back on the grass.
- On hot days, drink lots of water and lie under a shady tree.
- When you're happy, dance around and wag your entire body.
- No matter how often you're scolded, don't buy into the guilt thing and pout...run right back and make friends.
- Delight in the simple joy of a long walk.
- Eat with gusto and enthusiasm. Stop when you have had enough.
- Be loyal. Never pretend to be something you're not.

The Lighter Side of Life By Dolores Cullen, SFO Humor Editor

- If what you want lies buried, dig until you find it.
- When someone is having a bad day, be silent, sit close by and nuzzle him or her gently.

Children and dogs are as necessary to the welfare of the country as Wall Street and the railroads. Harry S. Truman

Dogs are better than human beings, because they know but do not tell. Emily Dickinson

A door is what a dog is perpetually on the wrong side of. Ogden Nash

God...sat down for a moment when the dog was finished in order to watch it...and to know that it was good, that nothing was lacking, that it could not have been made better. Rainer Maria Rilke

Dogs...do not ruin their sleep worrying about how to keep the objects they have, and to obtain the objects they have not. There is nothing of value they have to bequeath except their love and their faith. Eugene O'Neill

If you get to thinking you're a person of some influence, try ordering somebody else's dog around. Anonymous

Dogs are our link to paradise . . . To sit with a dog on a hillside on a glorious afternoon is to be back in Eden, where doing nothing was not boring—it was peace. Milan Kundera

Do you know why your dog, Fido, is no good at ballroom dancing? Its because he has two left feet.

BOOK REVIEWS



Ven A Ver

Orientación e Iniciación

Reseña por Wilfred y Delia Banchs, OFS

El libro de formación inicial para nuestra Orden Franciscana Seglar, *Ven a Ver*, por los autores el Fray Lester Bach, OFM Capuchino y Teresa V. Baker, OFS, originalmente escrito en inglés, ha sido traducido al español por nuestras hermanas seglares Adelina Frisbie, OFS y Carmen Vásquez, OFS.

Este librito les extiende "una invitación para explorar la vida franciscana seglar" en sus varios capítulos especialmente organizados para las etapas de orientación a la Orden y vida fraterna, y la de iniciación que culmina con el rito de iniciación a la Orden Franciscana Seglar. Dividido en seis secciones para cada etapa, el libro también contiene muchos otros temas importantes para estudio, preguntas para dialogar y tarea para ampliar el conocimiento. Con sus múltiples sugerencias y explicaciones, le ayuda al formador guiar con atención y esmero al aspirante en su jornada y discernir su vocación.

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Journey of the Heart: The Rule, The Way



By Sr. Mary - Cabrini Durkin
Reviewed by Barbara Sonnenberg, SFO

Angela Merici, foundress of the Company of St. Ursula, lived in Italy three centuries after St. Francis and, like him, conceived a radical way of life that is yet adaptable to our present age. She became a devout member of the Third Order of St. Francis in her early twenties and received spiritual guidance from the Friars, which Angela incorporated into her own Rule.

In Angela Merici's Journey of the Heart: The

Rule, the Way, author, Mary-Cabrini Durkin, a Sister of St Ursula, has produced a fascinating study of sixteenth century feminine lay spirituality. Her meticulous research into the historical factors surrounding the eleven chapters of the recently rediscovered "Trivulsian" Rule reveals the powerlessness of unmarried women to decide their own fate. Women of those times were the property of their fathers or other male relatives until the time of marriage when they came under complete control of their husbands. Women unwilling to marry could be forced to enter a convent (if a dowry was provided) or labor in the home of a male relative or be sent out to work, all at the mercy of their male guardian. Angela Merici's awareness of these factors makes the Rule and its ramifications a documentary of rights for the unmarried woman who wished to consecrate herself to God and yet remain in the ordinary setting of family, work and society. She combines prayers and religious practices with simplicity of dress, modesty of meien and a very practical method of governance.

This book for mature readers interested in lay religious movements, Renaissance history, church history, and women's history. For information regarding the book write to Sr. Mary-Cabrini Durkin, 2538 Woodburn Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45206

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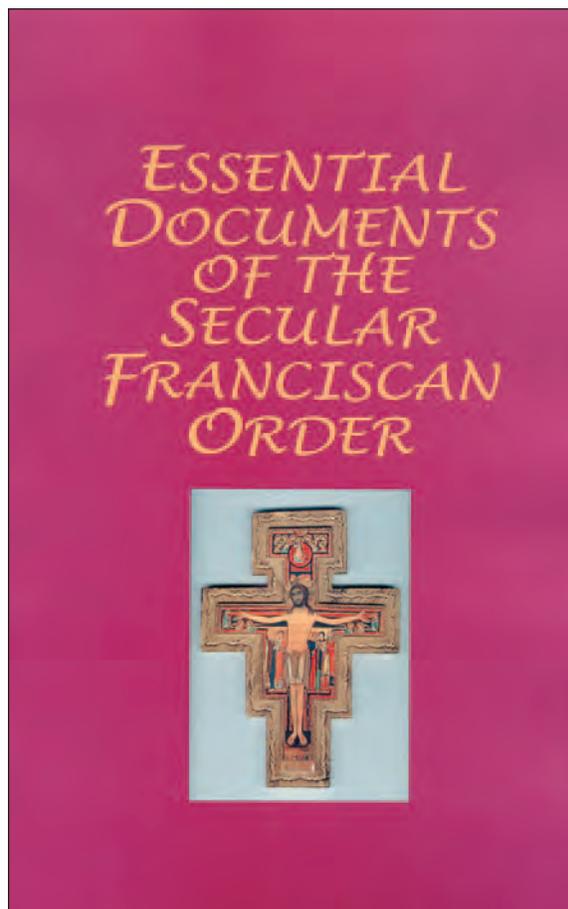
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