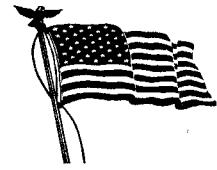


TAU-USA



Issue Number 25

The Newsletter of the National Fraternity of the
Secular Franciscan Order in the United States

Winter 1999

Christ Came for All, and the Spirit of Francis is for All

William Wicks, SFO, National Minister

I recall, oh about fifteen years ago, when Frances and I were in a renewal program at our Parish, the challenge was posed: Consider the possibility that there is no Catholic Church. The first idea that came to my mind was, like Peter's answer to Christ, "Lord, where would I go?" I love my church, the tradition, the liturgy, the teachings, the movement, and, especially of late, the inclusiveness. I am caught up in the movement toward inclusiveness. We have become a pluralistic church, a welcoming church.

Can you imagine what would happen if all of the brothers and sisters of Francis worked together to bring about a more fraternal and evangelical world? We have been going our separate ways for far too long.

I cherish my Roman Catholic faith and I thank God that I was born into it. And I also thank God for the statement by Pope John Paul II taken from his encyclical letter *Ut Unum Sint* (That They Be One). "With regard to other Christians, to the great Christian family, he (Pope John XXIII) said, 'What unites us is much greater than what divides us.'" I thank God for that

encyclical letter, which is based on Jesus' prayer for us recorded in John 17:21, that we all be one so that the world will know that God sent Him. We must pay serious attention to that prayer.

The term "ecumenism", to me, means being inclusive. It means respecting the way God is working in different people with their different spiritualities, different cultures, different denominations, and different religions. Brother James Boyle, TOR, and I were so impressed with the beautiful Franciscan spirituality that we experienced when we were conducting a visitation to the members of a Native American fraternity in Lodge Grass, Montana. We were humbled by their simple way of experiencing God within their native culture.

First, we should begin our inclusiveness within our own Franciscan family: the First Order Friars, the Poor Clares, and the Third Order Regular Friars and Religious Sisters. We share a common charism, a charism that, together, we can open up to the world around us. You have heard me say many times that I believe, more than ever before, the world needs our Franciscan spirituality.

Can you imagine what would happen if all of the brothers and sisters of Francis worked together to bring about a more fraternal and evangelical world? We have been going our separate ways for far too long. It is time that we get together. And this is starting to happen as we attend each other's affairs, and learn more about each other. Let us continue to do this.

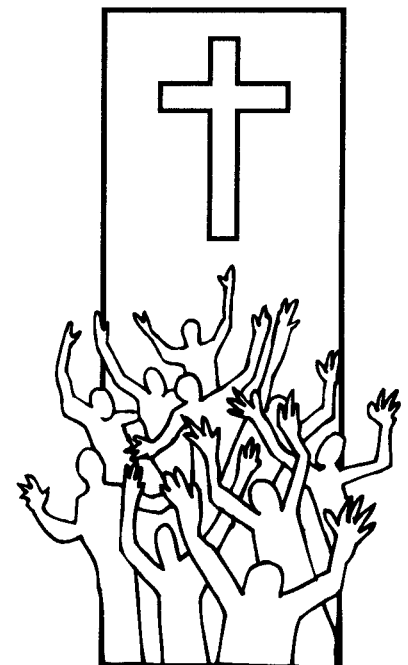
Next, we should be open to our Franciscan brothers and sisters of other denominations. A beautiful relationship is developing between the Secular Franciscan Order and the Third Order Society of Saint Francis (Anglican Franciscans). We have much more in common than we have differences. I recently spent two days with the TSSF at their annual business meeting in Mount Sinai, Long Island, NY. I felt very much at home there.

Lastly, there are many people out there with the Franciscan spirit – people in many walks of life that we encounter on our daily run. We should be sensitive to who they are and try to affirm the spirit of Francis that is already present within them, enticing that spirit to come forth, to blossom. We can, and must, walk with them. God does not exclude anyone from the invitation. Neither should we.

And, Lord, today I still have nowhere else to go. My faith is stronger than ever and my new understanding of God's invitation to "Come" is that it is not just for me, but for all mankind. And Francis' example of living the Gospel with a Franciscan spirit is not just for members of our Order to follow; the invitation is for everyone. And we, as Franciscans, must live out this spirit of inclusiveness with all of God's beloved Creation.

May your lives be filled with brothers and sisters of every kind in Christ and in Francis.

Peace, Love, and Joy,
Bill



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Guidelines for Submission of Articles

Due to the overwhelming number of submissions for the national newsletter, we cannot possibly include all submissions. Therefore, to increase the likelihood of your submission being printed, we offer the following guidelines:

- Please ensure that articles do not exceed 500 words;
- Please understand that articles may be edited for length and clarity;
- Submissions received after the deadline for a particular issue will be given consideration for the following issue.
- In the Franciscan interest in ecology, please try to send submissions in electronic format (e-mail or floppy disc), instead of on paper.

Letters to the Editors

All correspondence sent to the editors becomes the property of the editors, and may be published in TAU-USA. Please state in all correspondence whether you wish to have your name withheld.

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“Seek Out Ways of Unity and Fraternal Harmony Through Dialogue”

Thérèse and David Ream, SFO

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As the Great Jubilee Year 2000 approaches, the National Commissions offer our final contribution to the Ongoing Formation section of TAU-USA for the century and for the millennium! We seek to fulfill our commitment to recognize and celebrate the Secular Franciscan Order's solidarity with the Church, and especially with Pope John Paul II, by focusing this issue's articles on the Pope's ecumenical goal of dialogue with world religions and cultures.

The Holy Father wrote in his 1994 Apostolic Letter *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*:

It will be fitting to broach the vast subject of the crisis of civilization, which has become apparent especially in the West, which is highly developed from the standpoint of technology but is interiorly impoverished by its tendency to forget God or to keep Him at a distance. This crisis of civilization must be countered by the civilization of love, founded on the universal values of peace, solidarity, justice, and liberty, which find their full attainment in Christ.

As far as the field of religious awareness is concerned, the eve of the Year 2000 will provide a great opportunity, especially in view of the events of recent decades, for interreligious dialogue, in accordance with the specific guidelines set down by the Second Vatican Council in its declaration *Nostra Aetate*.

Who better than we Franciscans, and especially we Secular Franciscans, to be at the forefront of building this "civilization of love" to which the Holy Father calls the whole Church? Our Rule of Life is thoroughly permeated and animated by the values to which John Paul refers. As we stand at this moment on the threshold of the new millennium, this is perhaps a crucial time to remind ourselves that God has called us to be Franciscans not so much for our own personal salvation and growth in holiness, but for the sake of the Church and the world which so desperately need the convincing witness of Gospel-centered lives. That is what we profess to offer the Church and the world.

We cannot allow ourselves to retreat to our "private chapels" and "cloisters" as if to escape the evils present in our world. Our Seraphic Father Francis told us that the world itself *is* our cloister. Our call, especially as *Secular* Franciscans, is to engage the world in a dialogue of love, to challenge the culture of death with the Gospel of Life, to do our part to build up the civilization of love while "trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon" (*Rule*, Article 19). In terms of

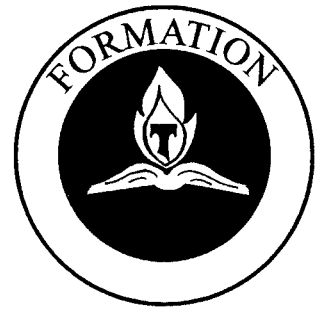
interreligious dialogue, Catholic Franciscans have been engaged in conversations with other Christian denominations and non-Christian religions throughout our history – ever since Saint Francis met with the Sultan of Egypt! Indeed, the Franciscan Family itself is an ecumenical reality as our recent contacts with our non-Catholic Franciscan sisters and brothers has made evident. A part of the Family, the Society of the Atonement (also known as the Graymoor Friars and Sisters), has the ecumenical apostolate at the very heart of its mission.

Made optimistic by our faith in the Lord Jesus who has already conquered sin and death, and who even now generously shares His divine life with us, we have no need to fear the positive and constructive elements of other religions and faith traditions within Christianity, or of contemporary society and culture, including Liberation Theology and the so-called New Age movement. To enter into a serious dialogue with religions and philosophies and practices which seem quite at odds with our own beliefs and values in no way implies our agreement with those philosophies and practices. It does, however, make possible the building of bridges rather than walls. We Franciscans are called to be bridge-builders and finders of common ground while we go about the task of fulfilling our vocation of being a leaven of Gospel values in the world and in the Church.

We Franciscans can do much to promote meaningful dialogue with world religions and cultures. For instance, our fraternities, or we as individuals, can make ourselves aware of the activities of the National Fraternity's Ecumenical Committee. We can participate in our local community ecumenical celebrations which often occur around Thanksgiving time, and we can observe the annual week of Prayer for Christian Unity (January 18th to the 25th in 2000; materials are available from The Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute, P.O. Box 300, Garrison, NY 10524). Our fraternities might choose to host a Spirit of Assisi Day of Prayer for Peace which commemorates Pope John Paul II's historic initiative of gathering together leaders of most of the world's religions on October 27, 1986, in Assisi to pray for peace (a sample service was made available to all the participants in the Formation Track at this summer's All Commissions' Conference at Saint Bonaventure University; if you are interested, ask your Regional Formation Director for a copy).

May the Lord inspire us and sustain us in our vocation to "seek out ways of unity and fraternal dialogue" (*Rule*, Article 19) as we strive with God's help and "with a gentle and courteous spirit [to] accept all people as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ" (*Rule*, Article 13).

Sisters and brothers, God give you peace!



Unity

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As experience brings about knowledge, knowledge brings about change and conversion. Knowledge being the precursor of wisdom, the more we know, the more we become. Saint Francis said, "where there is charity and wisdom, there is neither fear nor ignorance." To dispel fear is to lift the veil of hesitation to help develop unity in any given situation; not necessarily unity of agreement, but of mutual respect and understanding – the breeding ground of love and conversion. However, to make a difference, we must first confront our fears by encountering those people, places, and situations that appear difficult and distasteful. As Edmund Burke, British statesman, once said, "all that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing."

It is through the spirit of detachment that we experience the meaning of freedom...

Although we profess "to respect all creatures, animate and inanimate" (*Rule*, Article 18), the thought of encountering a venomous snake or a bees' nest is enough to make one cringe, but not for the snake charmer or beekeeper. However, before the charmer knew the snake and the beekeeper

knew the bee, they first knew fear. In order to dispel fear, it must be encountered. With Francis, we have the story of his making peace with the wolf of Gubbio, while the townspeople feared and despised the beast. Francis won over the wolf through love, not condemnation.

We often go to great lengths to avoid not only creatures, but also people, organizations, and situations with which we do not agree. However, here again, we have the example of Francis going off to a hostile foreign land to convert the Sultan, not out of hatred, but out of love. In doing so he was following Christ. If Jesus went only to those who agreed with Him, where would we be today? Thus, we are directed "to the forefront" (*Rule*, Article 18) in faith, seeking the goodness of people, realizing that each person becomes what and who they are by their lifelong experiences and influences. People do not differ with us just to be difficult, but they are subjects of their own experiences. It is a diverse world. Francis understood this wherever he went, hoping his presence would bring light to a dark situation. By extending our Franciscan hand and example to others we can do just that.

The more we exercise our courage in faith, the easier it becomes to place ourselves in situations we might otherwise avoid. It is through the spirit of detachment that we experience the meaning of freedom, the freedom to help influence change for the sake of unity. It is to the benefit of the Church and society that we bring our Franciscan witness to places where the need for

conversion exists, a conversion of peace and deeper love for God. Without courage we remain confined within ourselves. This is not what Francis would expect of us. This is not the way to follow his example as we profess. We best accomplish our mission, not by telling others how wrong they are, but by telling them how much they are loved.

Questions for Discussion:

1. List those organizations, creatures, and elements that alienate us? Why?
2. How might we bridge relations among those groups, individuals, and creatures?
3. What do we hope to achieve by broadening this circle of acceptance?



"High Praise" for Franciscans International

The following message was sent by Ignacio Harding, OFM, Co-director of Franciscans International, from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP5) in Bonn, Germany, November 4, 1999.

We have been encouraged, as everyday we are hearing more comments about our presence and especially our intervention. You may have heard that it went out to the whole world live by streaming video and thanks to the fast print job of Brother Conrad at Missionzentrale der Franziskaner, participants and delegates each got their own copy. The Alliance of Small Island States gave us each a t-shirt in recognition of our support for their dire needs. The entire Earth Negotiations Bulletin staff and several individually have congratulated us on our presentation. Greenpeace International asked for extra copies.

The delegate of the Holy See was happy to hear our intervention and was unaware of our organization. The delegates of Switzerland (very good) and Turkey (the best intervention of NGO's) gave our delegation high praise.

The coordinator of the World Federation of Trade Unions was also very enthused in his praise.

You can see how it was reported here at this web site in written form:

<http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/climate/cop5/negotiations/nov2n.html>

and if you would like to see and hear our intervention click on the RealAudio file under the picture of Charles Spencer SFO, wait a few seconds and you can see and hear the presentation.

The text of Charlie's address appears on page thirty-two of this issue of TAU-USA. – Editors.



“That All May be One”

Sonia and Jaime Bernardo, SFO
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In less than one month, the third millennium will be upon us. Many await the arrival with great hope and much joy, while an equal number are filled with caution and dread. Still others are certain that “Y2K” will be the beginning of the end of the world, when computers will crash and everything will cease to function.

For us Catholics, this is the time to lead all Christians in joyful celebration of the 2000th anniversary of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. We look at this event as an opportunity to restore unity and cooperation among all the Christian denominations. Pope John Paul II, in his encyclical *Ut Unum Sint*, expressed his desire to renew Christ’s call for unity to His disciples. “That all may be one” is, after all, what Christ wants. The separation of Christians is not supposed to be permanent.

Living in peace and harmony with all people, which is the basis for ecumenism, is not new to the Franciscans. Our Seraphic Father Saint Francis of Assisi, by his life and example, was a witness to ecumenism. His deep love for Jesus and for all God’s creation, his enduring commitment to peace and reconciliation, and his respect for human and animal life has made him a saint not only to Catholics, but also to other Christians and non-Christians. The life of Saint Francis can be the common ground upon which dialogue among Christians can start. The Rule of the SFO, the way of life we follow, is in perfect harmony with the Holy Father’s desire for communion, for unity among Christians, and for openness to conversion – the root of all ecumenism. Conversion is the most significant event in the life of Saint Francis. For him, without interior conversion, without newness of mind and viewpoint, there cannot be reconciliation and peace among all peoples of the world. As Francis told us, we must be instruments of peace.

What are we, as Secular Franciscans, supposed to do? We turn to our *Rule* of life:

Article 12 tells us “...obliged to acquire purity of heart because of the vocation they have embraced, they should set themselves free to love God and their brothers and sisters.” In *Way of Life*, Father Portasik said that Secular Franciscans must “recognize the equality of all men and women, regardless of race, color or creed, as brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ... they must respect them.” Secular Franciscans must seek ways to sow peace and harmony by showing genuine concern for the plight of minorities, immigrants, the poor, the homeless, the refugees; to look into their needs and find ways to meet them. As in the case of the immigrants, do they need to be tutored so that they can communicate well in English? Can you spend an hour a day to sit down and help them learn to read or speak the language? The other virtues necessary to accomplish this goal of peace and harmony are humility, forgiveness and charity. Father Benet Fonck, OFM, in *Called to*

Proclaim Christ, reminds us that everything we are and do comes from the Lord and flows back to Him. As we practice humility, forgiveness, and charity to our poor brothers and sisters, we become witnesses to others that Christ is the focus of our lives.



The SFO *Rule*, Article 13 says:

As the Father sees in every person the features of His Son, the first-born of many brothers and sisters, so the Secular Franciscans with a gentle and courteous spirit accept all people as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ.

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

This Article gives the basis of all ecumenical initiatives. All of us whom God created are “gifts” from God. We are created in His own image and likeness, but some persons decide not to follow His image. They want to be on their own. Secular Franciscans are called to accept them as they are, with understanding and kindness. We are called not to be judgmental, not to focus on their failings, nor to criticize them for their faults. Instead, we should build community with them and accept them as they are. Once Secular Franciscans accept someone as their brother or sister, a sense of community is developed. This includes the lowly, the abandoned, children, prisoners, divorced, and poor starving families.

In the SFO *Rule*, Article 19, we find this directive to all Secular Franciscans: “Mindful that they are bearers of peace which must be built unceasingly, they should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon.”

Even in this troubled society, full of incidences of crime, death, cruelty, and individual and family tragedies, Secular Franciscans are called nevertheless to be “bearers of peace”. The *Rule* suggests the promotion of dialogue. This is not an easy task. Dialogue gives people the courage to be open, to be truthful to one another, and to show faith in one another. Father Benet points out that “Secular Franciscan ministry begins with justice and ends with peace”. We can evangelize others by communicating to them our own peace and joy. But we cannot give what we do not have. Before one can be a peacemaker, one must have peace within oneself.

Questions for Discussion:

1. In your own little way, how can you bring joy and peace to others?
2. How can you promote unity and harmony in your own family? In your neighborhood?

Baby Steps

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We've been thinking about baby steps lately. Our grandson is turning six and we are putting together a book for him of pictures of himself each year, to illustrate the A.A. Milne poem "Now We Are Six". When he was one year old, he had just begun walking, and the picture shows a hesitant little foot reaching out, tentatively, not sure of what would come next. Now that he is six, he is wearing roller blades and is able to zip past just about everything. But he had to start with those first baby steps.

We in the Church are a lot like this when it comes to embracing new things. We start out feeling the ground with a tentative foot, before taking that first baby step. For a while we toddle along. But it is necessary to start with those first baby steps.

One of the teachings of Vatican II which we are just now beginning to understand, concerns our relationship with other faith traditions. Pope John Paul II has called us to begin to embrace ecumenism, and it is important that we take those first steps, even though we are not sure of what will come next.

It seems fitting that Franciscans, known as peacemakers and reconcilers, would be in the forefront of promoting ecumenical dialogue. Saint Francis showed us how to enter into a relationship with a different "other" for us when he went to visit the Sultan. Francis was not afraid to approach an individual with such a different background and different faith. He found common ground in their shared humanity, and was able to relate as one human being to another. We know that Francis believed that all creation is of God. He taught that we are all God's children, regardless of the faith we profess or the name by which we know God. Francis found it important to go out and meet "the other". In such meetings, many gifts of new understanding can be gained.

One such meeting took place in October 1986 when Pope John Paul II assembled 200 leaders of the world's religions in Assisi at the Portiuncula to be together and pray on behalf of peace. He is quoted as saying about the event that "Diversity is the nature of the human family". In doing this, the Holy Father gave direction to all of us to be open to opportunities for establishing relationships with our brothers and sisters of different faiths. But that was thirteen years ago, and, in many ways, it seems that we have not progressed very far toward this goal.

Within the so-called peace movement, we have had many chances to act together with members of the traditional "peace churches" – the Quakers, Mennonites, and Brethren. When we Franciscans get involved with peace and justice activities in our own communities, frequently we find that we are working side by side with people from these faiths, as well as from many others.

These days, most churches have a peace and justice or social concerns office. We encourage everyone to look for or to create opportunities for acting in concert with members of other churches who are engaged in pursuing similar goals from a faith-based perspective. It can be an extremely enriching experience for us, and, hopefully, for them as well.

The National Peace and Justice Commission has recently had the pleasure of meeting with a representative of the Anglican Third Order of Saint Francis (TSSF). We found that he is our brother in a very Franciscan sense of the word, and that, by learning about the TSSF and its process and journey, we learn more about our own Order. Our friend recently sent us a copy of a homily delivered by The Reverend Alden Whitney, retiring TSSF Minister General, at their Inter-Provincial Chapter meeting in September 1999. Reverend Whitney described a vision of the future that we can all embrace – SFO, TSSF, and others – and that will in turn embrace all of us.

Quoting from *The Good News of Jesus* by William Countryman, he said: "To move toward a world in which the principle of love is taken seriously will still be a long and difficult process, but it should be possible now in ways that it has not been in the past.... When I truly believe that I am as human as you and you are as human as I, that God loves us indistinguishably, I shall begin building a different kind of world."

As we enter the next millennium, let us begin to move beyond those first tentative steps toward this new vision. Through dialogue, let us begin to develop understanding, and remember that all is built on the firm foundation of God's love.

Some resources that we have found to enhance our understanding of ecumenical issues are:

- The National Conference of Catholic Bishops/US Catholic Conference lists 21 titles specifically on ecumenism. One of the most helpful ones is *Laity in the Church and the World: Resources for Ecumenical Dialogue* (document no. 5-247, \$9.95). It includes reflection questions. Check the NCCB/USCC web site for the list and to order:
<http://www.nccbuscc.org/opps/ecumenism.htm>

- *Inter-faith, Ecumenical Reconciliation, Goal for Third Millennium* by Paul Quirini – This is a short paper giving an overview of the Church's goal for the third millennium. It can be found at the NCCB/USCC web site <http://www.nccbuscc.org/jubilee/pastplan/article6.htm> or contact Dan & Sarah Mulholland at the above address for a copy. They can also be reached at the National Conference of Catholic Bishops/United States Catholic Conference, 3211 4th Street, N.E., Washington, DC 20017-1194 (202) 541-3000



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Work for Others – The Path of Penance and Reconciliation

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US News & World Report, in a feature article about Pope John Paul II, credited him with eight major achievements during his papacy, including "the insertion of ecumenism into the heart of Catholicism" (September 27, 1999). The practice of ecumenism is rooted in the Christian mandate to fulfill the Lord's desire "that all may be one" (John 17:21). To move from the lofty ideal of unity to the practical achievement of that dream is challenging. The Work Commission may properly ask: "How is ecumenism to be practically pursued by a Catholic layperson?"

In order to pursue ecumenism, we must, above all, live beyond our fears.

In the first place, the work of ecumenism is for everyone, not only for theologians. The Second Vatican Council's "Decree on Ecumenism" exhorts all the Catholic faithful to

"recognize the signs of the times and to participate actively in the work of ecumenism". The elements of the practice of ecumenism, taken principally from John Paul II's 1995 encyclical *Ut Unum Sint* (That They May Be One) as well as from the Decree, include: personal conversion, study, communal prayer, ecumenical dialogue, and practical cooperation.

Personal Conversion

The encyclical (paragraph 15) states: "the actual practice of the ecumenical journey towards unity emphasizes above all the need for interior conversion." Repentance is part of that journey: "an awareness of certain exclusions which seriously harm fraternal charity, of certain refusals to forgive, of a certain pride, of an unevangelical insistence on condemning the 'other side', of a disdain born of presumption.... There can be no ecumenism worthy of the name without a change of heart."

Study

"We must become familiar with the outlook of our separated brethren. Study is absolutely required for this, and it should be pursued in fidelity to the truth and with a spirit of good will. Catholics who already have a proper grounding need to acquire a more adequate understanding of the respective doctrines of our separated brethren, their history, their spiritual and liturgical life, their religious psychology and cultural background." ("Decree on Ecumenism" (DE), para. 9)

Common Prayer

"This change of heart and holiness of life, along with public and private prayer for the unity of Christians, should be regarded as the soul of the whole ecumenical movement, and can rightly be called 'spiritual

ecumenism.' Along the ecumenical path to unity, pride of place certainly belongs to common prayer, the prayerful union of those who gather together around Christ himself. If Christians, despite their divisions, can grow ever more united in common prayer around Christ, they will grow in the awareness of how little divides them in comparison to what unites them." (*Ut Unum Sint* (UUS), para. 22)

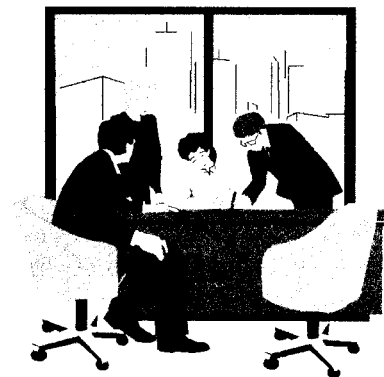


Ecumenical Dialogue

"In the Council's thinking, ecumenical dialogue is marked by a common quest for truth, particularly concerning the Church. In effect, truth forms consciences and directs efforts to promote unity". (UUS, para. 33) "Love for truth is the deepest dimension of any authentic quest for full communion between Christians. Without this love it would be impossible to face the objective theological, cultural, psychological and social difficulties which appear when disagreements are examined. This dimension... must be inseparably accompanied by a spirit of charity and humility. There must be charity towards one's partner in dialogue, and humility with regard to the truth which comes to light and which might require a review of assertions and attitudes." (UUS, para. 36)

Practical Cooperation

"Ecumenical cooperation is a true school of ecumenism, a dynamic road to unity. Unity of action leads to a full unity of faith. Through such cooperation, all believers in Christ are able to learn easily how they can understand each other better and esteem each other



more, and how the road to the unity of Christian may be made smooth." (UUS, para. 40)

In order to pursue ecumenism, we must, above all, live beyond our fears. Returning again to the *US News & World Report* article, we read how the Holy Father, who has encouraged us again and again to "be not afraid", exemplifies this trait in his own life: "The Yugoslav dissident Milovan Djilas once said that what most impressed him about John Paul II was that he was utterly without fear. That fearlessness is not stoic, nor is it a consequence of Karol Wojtyla's 'autonomy' as someone independent of others. It is unmistakably Christian fearlessness. In Christian faith, fear is not eliminated but transformed, through a profound personal encounter with Christ and His cross, the place where humanity was enabled to live beyond fear."

Living Each Year's Christian Unity Theme

Anthony and Mary Mazotti, SFO
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209-795-3809; e-mail: mkmaz@goldrush.com

The joint message for the 1999 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity this year was "God will dwell with them... they will be God's people." Revelation 21:1-7

The theme and text for each year's observance of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity are chosen and prepared by representatives of the World Council of Churches and representatives of the Pontifical Council for promoting Christian unity. The observance takes place every January.

In searching for ways to involve Franciscan Youth in next year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, we reviewed materials sent us by our National Ecumenical Committee published by the Graymoor Ecumenical and Interreligious Institute. The packet of materials contained a wealth of suggestions for observing the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: daily Scripture and prayer, Biblical reflections and prayers for eight days (in English and Spanish), homily notes, thematic music and prayers, interreligious calendar, and an address for requesting resource materials to celebrate the Week.

Pope John Paul II continues to encourage Catholics to do more to promote interfaith dialogue. The already approved packet published for use in the United States gives Franciscan Youth Leaders an excellent advantage and an early start preparing Franciscan Youth/Young Adults for the January 2000 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The pages we found most helpful were the general and specific suggestions offered for renewing our yearly commitment to the unity with which Christ gifted the Church, and to the fulfillment of His prayer "that all may be one".

Some of the practical suggestions for arriving at interfaith unity include:

- During the week, with Catholic friends, worship daily in different churches in the community; follow the service with fellowship, conversation, and refreshments;
- during the week, take up a special offering of money, food, clothing, and other needed items to benefit an ecumenical organization or relief agency;
- whenever possible encourage joint ecumenical cooperation and sponsorship of Christian service activities such as soup kitchens, shelters, and food pantries;
- schedule joint Bible Study sessions around the scriptural theme of the Week, at a church or in homes;
- sponsor contests, e.g. art, poster, essay to involve young people so that others may become better informed about the "quest" for Christian Unity;

- form an Interfaith Study Group of youth on the subject "The Church and the World."

Interested Franciscan Youth Leaders can receive a complete Week of Prayer packet for around \$7.00 (includes shipping and handling). Write to: Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute, Route 9, P.O. Box 300, Garrison, NY 10524-0300, or telephone 914-424-3458. Ask for the "Order Form of Resources, Year 2000 Week of Prayer For Christian Unity".

Questions for Discussion:

1. How does John 17:21 support Christian unity?
2. What is the great promise of Revelation 21:1-7?



*If we are really disciples and confessors of Christ,
Who reconciled man with God, we cannot live
without seeking such interior reconciliation for our
part too. We must not remain in sin and fail to
make efforts at finding the way again which leads to
the Father's house, where He is always waiting for
us to return.*

*The Church calls us to look for such a way: "We
implore you, in Christ's name to be reconciled with
God" (2 Corinthians 5:20). Only through being
reconciled with God in Christ's name can we taste
"how good the Lord is" (Psalm 34:9), by trying for
ourselves, experimentally as it were.*

*It is not of God's severity that confessors throughout
the world... speak; they speak rather of His merciful
bounty. And how many approach the confessional,
sometimes after many years' absence, bearing the
weight of mortal sins, and, as they depart from it,
find the desired relief. They find joy and peace of
conscience, which they could not find anywhere else.
No one actually has the power to free us from our
sin; God alone has that power. And the person who
obtains such remission receives the grace of a new life
of the spirit, which God alone can grant us in His
infinite goodness.*

Pope John Paul II



Family Matters

Carol Gentile, SFO
Outgoing Chair, National Family Commission
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"That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united with his wife, and they become one."

Genesis 2:24

Oneness

*An introduction to your new
Family Commission Co-chairs*

My first encounter with Sonia and Jaime Bernardo was at the fifteenth Quinquennial Congress. Sonia approached me and said, "If there is anything I can do to help with the Family Commission, please let me know!" As we continued our conversation on the importance of the integrity of family life, I realized that Sonia would be an excellent candidate for the Family Commission team. Shortly after this meeting, Sonia became a part of the National Family Commission.



Jaime and Sonia at this year's NAFRA meeting

The Holy Spirit at Work

Sonia's background in education, family management, community development, library sciences, and gerontology were united with Jaime's background in architectural design to build and sustain the Kingdom of God through the charism of Francis. Sonia and Jaime were professed in June 1985 into Mount Saint Sepulcher Fraternity, in Washington, DC, and are now members of Saint Mary of the Angels Fraternity in Maryland, in Saint Margaret of Cortona Region. They have received numerous awards and recognitions for their outstanding leadership. Both spouses assumed leadership roles within the Secular Franciscan Order: Sonia as local Minister and Formation Director; Jaime as member of the local Ecology Commission in 1993. Both Sonia and Jaime served as Co-chairs of the Environment Committee for the fifteenth Quinquennial Congress.



Their Philosophy of Marriage

As your newly appointed National Family Commission Co-chairs, they maintain a very strong bond. The two have become one in marriage, and together as partners they serve the Lord. Sonia and Jaime reveal this in their activities and lifestyle. They exemplify a very strongly knit family. The threads that they weave together create a beautiful tapestry of Franciscan life ministry, not only to each other and to their family, but also to other people whom they touch in their daily journey through life.

Together

Together... this couple has Jesus as the center of their home and family life.

Together... they have faced life's trails and tribulations.

Together... they nurture each other so that they can both grow in holiness.

Vision, Direction, Resources

Sonia and Jaime's vision for the National Family Commission is to develop hands-on activities beginning with the local fraternities, providing ways and means of drawing the fragmented families together, assisting and nurturing the whole family to become closer to the Church, making God the center of their lives. I am sure Saint Francis is very pleased!

God has continued to bless our Secular Franciscan Order with a couple serving as Co-chairs in love, passion, and matrimony to promote His Kingdom. I am sure God is very pleased!

Humble Gratitude

My brothers and sisters, I leave the National Family Commission Chair with humble gratitude to you all. I am blessed to have had your permission to serve you, and will continue to serve in whatever capacity the Holy Spirit asks of me.

God bless and keep you always for Him.



All Commissions Conference Videotapes Available

Videotapes are available from the All Commissions Conference. There are three tapes available:

- 1) Keynote address by Father Robert Stewart, OFM
- 2) Homilies by Father Matthew Gaskin, OFM, Bishop Henry Mansell, and Father Anthony Carrozzo, OFM
- 3) Commission Chairs' remarks and Commissioning Service.

The tapes are \$10.00 each, or all three for \$25.00. Please make checks payable to NAFRA, and send them to:

Commission Conference Tapes
360 Beard Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14214

Finances and Fraternity

Fr. Ben Brevoort OFMCap

This article is being published in installments. This is part 2 of 4. Future installments will address the concepts of Transparency and Control, Autonomy, and How to Increase Income.

3. Solidarity

The General Constitutions (Article 30(3)) say further that the "contribution, according to each one's means" has to be given "in a family spirit". Both expressions should be read in terms of solidarity. The contributions of all brothers and sisters are not seen as isolated gestures, but together, according to each one's means, according to the situations and the means of the family, of the fraternity, and of all its members. The financial contribution is an expression of solidarity and fraternity.

The idea that the contribution is given in a family spirit means that one gives spontaneously and freely, and not because one is forced. It means, also, that it is seen as one's own, a contribution given to one's own family, not as a donation, or as a debt paid to an outsider. Not all members of the family have the same means:

The idea that the contribution is given in a family spirit means that one gives spontaneously and freely, and not because one is forced.

some work, others study, still others are jobless or live from their pensions, etc. It is quite natural that these differences are taken into consideration, by the fraternity and by the person contributing.

The fraternity needs to show understanding to the person who has very limited economic possibilities, and therefore cannot contribute much. But the fraternity should also be sure that, and, if necessary, even insist that, the more wealthy brothers and sisters contribute according to their greater means.

All brothers and sisters, for their part, should be convinced of their duty to offer a contribution according to their own means. The richer brothers and sisters should feel the duty to offer substantial contributions. But, also, the financially poorer brothers and

sisters should feel it their duty to offer their own penny. All contributions are important for the fraternity, because all contributions to the life of the family are important, from the little baby to the old grandfather. In fraternity, the widow's mite is as important as the check of her rich brother.

Solidarity starts in one's own fraternity, among the members of the local fraternity, where all need to contribute according to their own means. To arrive at this consciousness calls for a patient and constant effort of formation on the part of the council. It is not enough to establish a fixed contribution to be given each month. Such a kind of contribution lacks solidarity. An "equal" contribution in terms of the same amount of money is not equal in relation to the financial means of each member, and puts a heavier burden on the shoulders of the weaker members of the fraternity. To learn to contribute "in a family spirit... according to one's own means" (Constitutions, Article 30(3)) is to learn to live in fraternity, in solidarity with all brothers and sisters.

Solidarity means that each one offers what he or she can offer, with the same generosity and the same effort, according to one's own means. Solidarity means also that the contributions are put together, and are used for the needs of the fraternity and of all its members. Family spirit is important in regard to expenses as well, because not only the contributions should be according to one's own means. The expenditures too should be made in a family spirit, where not all members have the same needs. The needs of a handicapped brother or sister are not the same as those of a person who moves freely; a medical doctor or a notary has different obligations and expenses than a bus-driver or a street-sweeper. A fraternity with a score of members has different needs than one with hundreds; a fraternity running big works of charity has different needs from the one just helping other charitable agencies in the diocese or in the parish.

What has been said is valid for the fraternities at all levels: local, regional, national, and international. The sole difference is that, at the higher levels, "fraternities should contribute" (Rule, Article 25) to "the operation of the fraternities at higher levels" (Constitutions, 30(3)). Here, too, it remains true that all fraternities should contribute in a family spirit, according to their own means. Here, too, solidarity means that all offer the contribution they can give, and receive the service they need. Here, too, a patient and constant effort of formation is needed, so that all fraternities become conscious of their duty to contribute to the needs of the whole Order, at all its levels.



Advice from the National Treasurer

John Sanborn, SFO

As National Treasurer I often receive letters and e-mails like the one that follows. This is being published so that others can learn from this fraternity's experience.

Dear John,

I'm writing with the hope you will have some advice for us. Many years ago, a treasurer opened a bank account for our fraternity, and used the Taxpayers Federal ID Number that actually belongs to the church where we meet. I'm assuming this was done with permission,

since our fraternity began and still meets there. How else could the treasurer have even known their number?

This week the bank notified our current Treasurer that the church had opened an account at one of their branches and discovered that we were using their ID Number. We were told to get a form from an accountant, fill it out, and then call the IRS at 1-800-829-1040, and ask for our own Taxpayers Federal ID Number, which the IRS will give us over the telephone, if we have the form. We have sixty days to do this or our account will be closed.

We are a fairly small fraternity, without expertise in these matters. We have about fifty members, of whom only eighteen or so are active. The rest are in their 70's and up and, for the most part, in poor health. I've only been a member since 1993, so I haven't known any former treasurers. Any and all advice is needed and most welcome.

My questions are these:

1. *Does each fraternity need to apply for its own Taxpayers Federal ID Number?*

JKS answers: "Some regions allow their fraternities to use the region's 'EIN' (Federal ID number: Employers ID Number - even though you do not have employees, this is what the number is often called). Ask your Regional Treasurer. Some regions do not allow this, and, in many cases, fraternities find it easier just to apply to the IRS for their own EIN."

2. *If so, what kind of form am I supposed to request from an accountant?*

JKS answers: "Use form 'SS4', which can be requested using the IRS 800 number (1-800-829-1040 or 1-800-829-3676) or over the internet: http://www.irs.ustreas.gov/prod/forms_pubs/forms.html (or) <http://ftp.fedworld.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fss4.pdf>

"A note on filling in the form: on line 8a, 'Type of entity', check off 'Church or church-controlled organization'; on line 9, 'Reason for applying', check off 'Banking purpose' and specify 'required to open account'. If you have any other problems with the form, ask me or your Regional Treasurer."

3. *Our tax statement for 1998 also lists a Payers EIN. I have no idea where this came from. Is it significant?*

JKS answers: "This is the EIN of the paying institution, your bank. It is not pertinent to our discussion."

4. *I have a copy of the letters you provided that refer to the group ruling that gives a group tax exemption to the National Fraternity of the SFO, and also covers the various provinces, regions, and fraternities. I don't know how to use the letter in this circumstance, or if it applies at all.*

JKS answers: "The letter that you have is from the United States Catholic Conference, with attached IRS letter ruling, which explains the tax exempt status for the Catholic Church and all the related organizations that are listed in the National Catholic Directory. The letter can be used as part of an application to the state for sales and use tax exempt status. See number 6 below.

In order to convince the state that your fraternity is part of the National Fraternity, a more specific letter, which can be issued from my office, is usually required."

5. *Is the treasurer supposed to file income tax returns even though we are a tax exempt group? We had interest income on our bank account for 1998.*

JKS answers: "You are part of an federally tax exempt organization. You are never required to file federal income tax returns - never!"

6. *What about state tax returns? I see on page 2, number 3 of the Explanation that "inclusion in the group ruling has no effect on an organization's liability for state or local income, sales or property taxes. Typically, separate exemptions must be obtained from the appropriate state or local tax authorities in order to qualify for any applicable exemptions." Does the Regional Treasurer do this? Or must each fraternity do something?*

JKS answers: "Your fraternity is probably exempt from state income taxes, and probably not exempt from state sales and use taxes. Ask your Regional Treasurer, who would be more familiar with your state's tax laws. Applications for exemption from state sales and use tax (if allowed by the state) can be filed by the fraternity or the region, depending on state laws. Again, ask your Regional Treasurer."

7. *Do you know how other fraternities are handling their bank accounts? Surely we're not the only one.*

JKS answers: "Many fraternities have experienced the same difficulties that you are confronted with, and end up either applying for an EIN, or using the region's EIN."

8. *I was surprised to learn, when I became Minister, that the bank insists we use a business account, which costs more to maintain. Is this what other fraternities use? And how is the account named? Originally, our checks simply read "Secular Franciscan Order". Then the Treasurer added the name of our fraternity to new checks. There is no address on the checks, just the name. The mailing address on the account is that of the current Treasurer.*

JKS answers: "It is not unusual for banks to require a fraternity to use a business account. You can ask around to other banks in your area, but are not likely to come up with a better alternative. The name on your bank accounts should reflect the fraternity name. If you end up using the region's EIN, the region may require you to use a naming convention which includes the region's name. Your Regional Treasurer will let you know.

"The mailing address for your bank accounts should be the permanent address of the fraternity, if possible, such as the church address, if that is allowed by the church. Otherwise the Minister's address should be used, or if preferred, the address of the Secretary. (The idea is to have some internal control measures: in this case, for instance, the Minister or Secretary will see the bank statements before turning them over to the Treasurer)."

Sacrifices for the Community

The following is excerpted from the Ongoing Formation session conducted by Brother James Reiter, OFM Conv, at the NAFRA meeting in Danville.



Photo by Antony Outhwaite, SFO

Brother James Reiter, OFM Conv conducts On-going Formation

About five years ago I came across an article in *America* magazine by Father Albert Dilanni, the former vicar general of the Society of Mary.

In this article, Father Dilanni quotes Sister Joan Chistister of the Erie, PA Benedictines. The quote is as follows: "What do you stand for? Who knows what you stand for? Because if no one knows what you stand for, you don't stand for it."

Father Dilanni goes on to describe two types of members which make up all religious communities and pretty much all organizations. He refers to them as "intentional" and "associational" members. Both types of members are drawn to and believe in what the community or organization stands for. The difference is that the intentional member is willing to make sacrifices for the community and the associational member participates when it is convenient. The healthy and vibrant future of the community is dependent upon the number of intentional members out-numbering the associational members. If the opposite occurs, the vibrancy and vision of the community could be greatly affected to the extent that it could lose its identity altogether.

Now let's get on to the topic: who we are and what we do. Who we are describes the basis upon which we pattern our lives, what we stand for, what motivates us to be who we are. What we do describes *how* we attempt to accomplish who we are.

Allow me to turn the two statements into two questions: "Who are we?" and "What do we do?" I am going to begin with the second question: "What do we do?" Most of us are pretty capable of describing what we do. When

the question is asked of us, "What do you do for a living?", we are pretty good at giving a definite description. We might respond that we are a doctor, nurse, engineer, teacher, accountant, housewife, social worker, parish priest, etc.

As Franciscans, this is not a sufficient answer, nor necessarily is it the correct answer to the question. Each year that I have been the Director of Novices, I like to rattle the novices with the statement "Nothing that we do as Franciscans requires us to be a Franciscan to do the task". If you want to be a parish priest, you could be a diocesan priest. Running parishes is their primary ministry. Any qualified person can be a teacher, nurse, social worker, etc.

One of the unique qualities of the Franciscan Order is that we were not founded for any particular task, except to live the Holy Gospel. The *how* was to be discerned in communion with the inspiration of the Spirit. We hear Francis say that when the Lord sent him brothers, he didn't know what to do, but the Lord showed him.

There are two types of ministries that we, as Franciscans, perform: internal and external. Internal ministries are those that directly involve our fellow Franciscans, such as National, Regional or Local Minister, Provincial Guardian, Formation Director. You do have to be a Franciscan to be engaged in these types of ministries. It would be unthinkable, or at least odd, if an advertisement were to appear in some Catholic publication, "The Secular Franciscans of Saint Anthony of Padua Fraternity are looking for a qualified lay person to assume the responsibility of the office of Minister for our fraternity". The external ministries which I mentioned earlier do not require one to be a Franciscan; any qualified person can fulfill those tasks. What makes what we do "Franciscan?"

We will come back to the answer later.

Now I will discuss the first question: "Who are we?"

In an address given to the National Religious Vocation Directors Conference by Sister Doris Gottemueller, who at the time was the President of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, she described us as ordinary people called to live extraordinary lives.

Who are we? First of all, we are men and women who have been called. We are ordinary people. The only requirement is that we are willing to respond in the affirmative to the caller, who is Christ. The real

challenge of responding to Christ's call is not "Can I do this?". Rather, it is "Do I want to follow Christ?"

Who are we? Secondly, we are men and women who, in responding to Christ's call, desire to accept His challenge to live our lives in an extraordinary manner, according to the design of His Holy Gospel. We further desire to make Christ incarnate in our own lives, as Francis desired to do in his.

Isn't that why Francis founded our Order in the first place? To show that it is possible to live out the Gospel

*Isn't that why
Francis founded
our Order in the
first place?*

in daily life? Isn't that why the laity of Francis' time asked him for a rule upon which to pattern their lives, so that they, too, might live the Gospel in an extraordinary manner?

This leads us back to what we really do. All baptized Christians are called to pattern their lives on the Gospels, and to imitate the obedience, poverty, and chastity of Christ, according to their particular state of life.

Obedience, poverty, and chastity are threads of a tapestry. Each has its own uniqueness, but at the same time requires a blending of the others. Francis writes that after the period of probation has ended, the friar is to profess obedience into the hands of his minister. He does not mention poverty and chastity. Obedience appears to be the cornerstone upon which poverty and chastity hinge. If I read Francis' words correctly, and correctly understand his intention, I think that the following would express what he means. If you are obedient, you will be poor and chaste. If you are poor, you will be obedient and chaste. If you are chaste, you will be obedient and poor.

When we focus on the obedience of Christ, I believe that our attention has to be on Christ's faithfulness in living His life in constant obedience to the will of His heavenly Father. We know, through our reading of the Gospels, that Christ was always in tune or in touch with the Father, through prayer and periods of reflection and solitude. He always acted in union with the Father, not independently of the Father, saying "Father, let Your will and not Mine be done".

When we focus on the poverty of Christ, I believe that our attention has to be focused on Christ's total dependence upon the Father. He never chooses to be the focal point, but rather redirects attention to the Father. He claims nothing as His own. He invites, but never coerces others. He says "Blessed are the poor in spirit". Gospel poverty is not about material deprivation; it is about an interior attitude that acknowledges the relationship between Creator and creature.

When we focus on the chastity of Christ, I believe that our attention has to be focused on Christ's unconditional love. We recall the words of Scripture "God is love, they who abide in love, abide in God, and God in them". I remember visiting Assisi for the first time, and receiving a tour of the Basilica from one of our friars, who pointed out the *Allegory of the Vows* above the altar in the lower basilica. He pointed out that chastity, which was portrayed as a young woman entangled in a bush while trying to reach up to God, had nothing to do with sexuality. He explained that, in Francis' mind, chastity was achieving oneness, or union, with God. Anything that hinders me in seeking union with God is a violation of chastity.

In closing, I would like to emphasize that who we are and what we do are both important aspects of our identity as Franciscans. The two cannot be separated. What we do makes sense only when we have clarified who we are. Francis did not expect either the friars or the seculars to just sit around and be. He wanted us

also to be doers. I imagine that Saint Paul's words to the early Christians are something of what Francis had in mind. Paul states: "Let the one who does not work, not eat". (2 Thessalonians 3:10)

I believe that this can be translated into our times, in that those who do not actively participate in the life of the fraternity should not lay claim to calling themselves Franciscans. The elderly and infirm are the exception. As I mentioned earlier, if the associational members outnumber the intentional members, then the life of the fraternity is threatened.



Making a Difference

Patricia Mulligan, SFO

Peace and Justice Commission, Lady Poverty Region

"How can you possibly do that? How can you sit beside rapists, murderers and thieves? The very thought of it makes me sick. In fact, I'm getting a headache just thinking about it." I was so taken aback by the force behind the questions that it took me a few seconds of stumbling before I could formulate an answer.

When I recovered, I responded to my Franciscan sister that the prison ministry, in its various forms, is very much a Franciscan apostolate. Saint Francis was once a prisoner of war. Christ was held in a prison. And Christ calls all of us through the Corporal Works of Mercy to visit prisoners. I imagine that the call really is to help prisoners in whatever way we are able. Not all are called to actually go into the prisons.

Most of the incarcerated will eventually be released back into society. What then? I believe it is wise to take advantage of what might be a "teachable moment" in their lives. Some of them might be hearing for the very first time what the Catholic faith is all about. On a weekly basis, I go into the State Correctional Facility at Mercer, PA. I meet with a group of young, and not so young, men to share my faith. Of course, that leads to many questions about our religion. The Metanoia Retreat Team, of which I am a member, addresses, over a period of four consecutive days, specific areas of our Catholic Faith, such as Grace, Obstacles to Grace, Holiness or Piety, the Sacraments – you can imagine the questions about that one – the Hierarchy of the Church, and, specifically, the role of Catholic laity, among many other things.

In the above situations, we encourage the prisoners to develop a personal relationship with Christ, a conversion of heart, a *metanoia*.

The alternative to ministering to prisoners is to return them to society just as ignorant about Jesus as they were when they were sentenced, or, perhaps, worse than when they went in. Prison is not a place that encourages high moral standards. We do not know just what will happen to the inmates when they leave, but we walk in faith and trust the Holy Spirit. "Lord, make us instruments of your peace..."

Regional Roundup



Please be sure to add us to the mailing list for your regional newsletter:

*Mr and Mrs Antony Outhwaite, SFO, Editors, TAU-USA
6 Light Street, Nuangola, PA 18637*

Blessed Katharine Drexel Region

Blessed Katharine Drexel Region held their annual Regional Council Meeting on November 13, 1999, at the Shrine of Blessed Katharine Drexel in Bensalem, PA. The Region held an installation ceremony for their Regional Apostolic Commission Chairs.

On November 17, the Region participated in a Fast for Jubilee Justice, by refraining from spending money on that day. It was suggested that the dollars not spent that day on "impulse items" be donated to charity.

The full Regional Council will meet during the weekend of March 10-12, 2000, at Saint Francis Retreat Center in Easton, PA, and will receive a Fraternal Visit from Bill Wicks, SFO, National Minister, and a Pastoral Visit from Brother James Boyle, TOR, President of the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants.

In January and February 2000, the Regional Formation Director, Mrs. Antony Outhwaite, SFO, will present a series of five Formation Workshops, one in each district of the Region. Mrs. Outhwaite looks forward to establishing a Regional Formation Commission in March.

On April 6, 2000 Sister Rosemary Lynch, OSF will offer a presentation entitled "Nurturing a Culture of Non-Violence" at the Blessed Katharine Drexel Shrine.

On June 17, 2000, the Regional Commission Chairs will present a one-day Regional All Commissions Conference, patterned after the national conference held in June of this year.

The Region has a new web site, which is located at <http://www.rc.net/sfo/bkd/>

Divine Mercy Region

Divine Mercy Region held their annual Regional Full Council Meeting, August 6-8, 1999. Kay Pelletier, SFO, delegate of the National Minister, conducted a Fraternal Visit. Gloria Jean Staley, SFO introduced Father Raymond Oosdyke, OFM Conv., the newly appointed Regional Spiritual Assistant. Bishop Kenneth J. Povish, SFO, addressed the group on Saturday morning.

The Region held a Day of Recollection at Holy Cross Church, Lansing MI, on August 28, 1999. The theme was "God, Our Father of Mercies!". Father Pius Poff, OFM Conv. led the conference; and Monica Ingram,

SFO gave a talk entitled "Brothers and Sisters, Children of the Same Father".

The Region participated in the Detroit, MI gathering of young adults called PRISM. They set up a well-received booth, and participated in a presentation of Lay Franciscan Spirituality to the young adults. Approximately thirty-five of the two hundred young adults at the gathering attended the workshop.

Five Franciscan Martyrs Region

Saint Joseph's Fraternity, Cocoa Beach, FL, was canonically established on June 6, 1998.

Mary Ann Smelter, SFO was invited to set up a display table for Franciscans International at the Regional Meeting at the San Pedro Center in Winter Park, FL, May 27-30, 1999. Sister Michelle Balek, OSF, of Wisconsin, who is the North American Coordinator for FI, supplied her with well-received posters and handouts. Petitions to "Stop the Bombing in Kosovo", and for the "Cancellation of Unpayable Debts by Impoverished Nations" were circulated. Informational packets were distributed to each Fraternity Minister at the meeting, along with a request to duplicate and share them with the members of their communities. Bill Wicks, SFO, National Minister, stated that it was the first Franciscans International display he had seen at a regional meeting.

On September 29, 1999, Father Robert Baker, SFO, former local Spiritual Assistant to Saint Augustine (FL) Fraternity was ordained Bishop of Charleston, SC. (See the article on page twenty-seven).

The Region will hold Chapter of Mats February 4-6, 2000, at the San Pedro Center. Father Regis Armstrong, OFM Cap. will be the speaker. Also, a Regional Meeting will be held May 26-28, 2000 at the San Pedro Center.

The Region has a web site, which is located at <http://Franciscan.simplenet.com/>

Holy Trinity Region

Holy Trinity Region held a Day of Recollection at a Poor Clare Monastery on August 14, 1999. Fifty-six SFOs, representing fifteen fraternities, were in attendance. The theme of the day was "Saint Clare and the Contemplative Side of Our Franciscan Vocation". Three of the Poor Clares presented incidents from the lives of Saint Clare and Francis, excerpts from Saint Clare's writings, and their own personal observations and interpretations, to show that contemplation was the center of Clare's life, and could become the center of our own, even in the midst of an active life.

The Region held their full Council Meeting at Saint Anthony of Padua Church in Clarksville, IN, on October 31, 1999.

Saint Boniface Fraternity in Louisville, KY celebrated their 150th Anniversary of Canonical Establishment in November.

The Region's Annual Retreat will be held April 28-30, 2000, at Friarhurst Retreat Center in Cincinnati, OH. The theme will be "The Lord's Prayer - Our Prayer".

Lady Poverty Region

During the fraternity's annual meeting at Villa Maria Retreat House in Sharon, PA, April 23-25, 1999, Father Camillus MacRory, OFM Cap. conducted a Pastoral Visit, and Bill Wicks, SFO, National Minister conducted a Fraternal Visit.

Los Tres Compañeros Region

Los Tres Compañeros Region has formed a Fraternal Life Committee. Clare McCluggage, SFO, Regional Vice Minister, will oversee established Fraternities, and Delia Banchs, SFO, Regional Secretary, will oversee the emerging groups and communities.

The Region's Annual Full Council Meeting was held October 8-10, 1999, at the Moye Center in Castroville, TX.

The Region held a retreat October 29-31, 1999, in preparation for Jubilee Year 2000, at the Catholic Formation Center in Dallas, TX. The theme was "There are Many Rooms in My Father's House". The Retreat Master was Father Gabriel Massaro, OFM Cap.

They will hold a retreat at Cedarbrake Retreat Center in Belton, TX, June 2-4, 2000. The theme will be "Know Yourself, Know Your God, and Know Your Vocation".

Our Lady of the Angels Region

Our Lady of the Angels Region held their Chapter of Elections April 17, 1999. Marie Amore, SFO, National Vice Minister, and Father Matthew Gaskin, OFM, National Spiritual Assistant, oversaw the elections. Kevin Corbett, SFO was elected Minister.

The Manhattan Cluster of the Region celebrated the Feast of Saint Clare in Saint Francis of Assisi Church in New York City. The guest speaker was Sister Bernadette Sullivan of the Franciscan Sisters of the Poor.

The Region hosted the Second Annual Episcopal Mass for the Secular Franciscan Family on October 10, 1999, at Sacred Heart Cathedral-Basilica, Newark, NJ. Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick presided. The Portiuncula Award was presented to Ronald Pihokker, SFO.

The fifth annual Regional Retreat was held October 15-17, 1999, at Sacred Heart Retreat Center in Newton, NJ. Father Matthias Wesnofske, OFM Cap., served as Retreat Master.

The Region held their full Council Meeting on November 13, 1999.

Saint Margaret of Cortona Region

The "Catch the Fire" regional team met during the weekend of February 26-28, 1999, for a dry run of their presentation of "Catch the Fire" materials to local fraternities. Regional Spiritual Assistant Father Jim Morman, TOR, was present with team members Tom Bello, SFO, Mary Clarke, SFO, Ann Corro, SFO, Tony DelPopolo, SFO, Anne Mulqueen, SFO, Heleni Pedersoli, SFO, Carolyn Protin, SFO, and Bill Tubbs, SFO. The team will facilitate "Catch the Fire" weekends over the next four years.

The annual retreat was held October 8-10, 1999 at Loyola Retreat House in Faulkner, MD. The Retreat Director, Father Mark Curesky, OFM Conv., planned a wonderful weekend, interweaving the topics "Who or what is the center of your life?", "What we say and what we do: are they the same or do they differ?", and "What gets in the way of them being the same?".

The Region held their annual council meeting on October 30, 1999, at Saint Francis Hall, Franciscan Monastery, Washington, DC.

Santa Maria de Las Montañas Region

The Region celebrated the Canonical Establishment of El Poverello of the Plains Fraternity on August 14, 1999 in Stratton, NE. The establishment took place at Saint Joseph's Church, during the Vigil Mass for the Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary. Provincial Spiritual Assistant Felix Petrovsky, OFM Cap. concelebrated and preached the homily. The Document of Canonical Establishment, which was signed by Fabian Bruskevitz, Bishop of Lincoln, NE, on June 9, 1999, was read by Father Felix during the Mass, and was signed by witnesses Joann Solano, SFO, Regional Vice Minister, and Frank Ruda, SFO, Minister of Sacred Heart Fraternity, Atwood, KS, the sponsoring fraternity.

Troubadours of Peace Region

Saint Francis Fraternity in Spokane, WA is grateful for the blessing of eighteen years of love and guidance from Sister Dorothy Amon, FSPA, who has recently retired as their Spiritual Assistant.

Northwestern United States

Northwestern Franciscans and their families gathered at the First Annual All-Franciscan Campout, August 20-22, 1999 at Mossyrock Park in Washington.

There was time for visiting, nature walks, arts and crafts, swimming, prayer, awards, and stories around the campfire. A communal dinner was shared by all of the more than forty Secular Franciscans who gathered from seven fraternities and one emerging community.



**When we pray as Jesus taught –
really the only way to pray – we
offer to the Father and the Holy
Spirit, immeasurable honor. We also
guarantee ourselves a prayerfully
satisfying experience, filled with
peace of heart rooted in Faith, Hope,
and Charity. Three Bright Lights
illuminating the darkness of the
ordinary human experience to reveal
vistas of understanding not attainable
in an other way.**

Bruce Snowden, SFO
Minister, The Poor Clare Fraternity, Tau Cross Region

Encuentro 2000

Juan F. Lezcano, SFO
Multicultural Coordinator
1216 SW 353rd Street
Federal Way, WA 98023

253-925-7206; e-mail: lezj300@dshs.wa.gov

The national gathering and celebration of the ethnic diversity and broad multicultural perspective of the Catholic Church in the United States will be held July 6-9, 2000 in Los Angeles.

To encourage the spirit of Encuentro 2000 at every local parish in the year ahead, the U.S. Catholic Conference has developed a parish guide, "Many Faces in God's House: A Catholic Vision for the Third Millennium". Six three-hour sessions form the basic Encuentro 2000 process for the parish setting. This program can be adapted for fraternity gatherings.

According to Bishop Gerald R. Barnes of San Bernardino, Chairman of the Bishops' Committee on Hispanic Affairs, "the central goal of 'Many Faces in God's House' is to build more vibrant and welcoming parishes [fraternities], where Catholics from different cultural backgrounds are fully incorporated in the One Body of Christ."

Bishop Barnes said that "the process brings together people of various cultures to share their stories and dreams, voice concerns, grow together in unity, celebrate the Catholic faith, and come to a deeper understanding of the Church's identity and mission."

He added, "This is not just about Hispanics. It's about African Americans, European Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans and South Pacific Islanders. Encuentro 2000 will be an effort to bring all the different groups together."

Encuentro 2000 provides a process of open dialogue to allow participants to understand each other's cultures and aspirations, lessen tensions, overcome fears, and build strong and united faith communities. Using the Encuentro 2000 guide, fraternities can discuss and reflect on the six themes of "Many Faces in God's House".

Celebrating the many faces in God's house is a wonderful way of commemorating the 2000th year since the birth of Jesus Christ. It is a first step, but it is a good way to start the new millennium as the One Body of Christ. I hope that you will get involved locally through your fraternity and/or parish and maybe some might even be able to attend the event in Los Angeles. The National Multicultural Committee will be attending this event in Los Angeles, representing the National Fraternity.

Paz y Bien,
Juan F. Lezcano, SFO
Multicultural Coordinator

Copies of the Encuentro 2000 Parish Guide, "Many Faces in God's House", are available at \$6.50 per copy (this includes shipping and handling) from Hispanic Affairs, 3211 Fourth Street NE, Washington, DC 20017.

Encuentro 2000

Juan F. Lezcano, SFO
Coordinador Multicultural

Este encuentro nacional, que se realizara el proximo 6-9 de julio de 2000 en Los Angeles, celebrara la diversidad etnica y amplia perspectiva multicultural de la iglesia en los Estados Unidos.

La Conferencia Catolica ha desarrollado la guia para parroquias "Muchos Rostros en la Casa de Dios: Una Vision Catolica para el Tercer Milenio", con el fin de fomentar el espiritu de Encuentro 2000 en todas las parroquias. Las seis sesiones de 3 horas cada una son parte basica del proceso del encuentro en las parroquias. Se puede ajustar este programa por recolecciones de la fraternidad.

"El objetivo primordial de 'Muchos Rostros en la Casa de Dios' es construir parroquias [fraternidades] mas vivas y acogedoras en donde catolicos de todo antecedente cultural esten totalmente incorporados al Cuerpo de Cristo," manifesto el obispo Gerald R. Barnes de San Bernardino, presidente del Comite de Obispos para Asuntos Hispanos.

El obispo Barnes agrego que "este proceso reúne a personas de varias culturas para que compartan sus historias, sus sueños, y sus preocupaciones, para crecer juntos en unidad, para celebrar su fe catolica, y llegar a un entendimiento mas profundo de lo que es la identidad y mision de la iglesia."

Agrego que "este encuentro no solo se trata de la comunidad hispana. Se trata de la afro-americana, europeo-americana, asiatico-americana, nativo-americana, asi como la de islenos del Pacifico Sur. Encuentro 2000 sera un esfuerzo para reunir a todos los grupos."

Encuentro 2000 nos brinda un proceso de dialogo abierto el cual permite que los participantes comprendan las culturas y aspiraciones de los demas, reduzca tensiones, venza temores, y construya comunidades de fe fuertes y unidas. Al usar la guia para Encuentro 2000, las fraternidades pueden dialogar y reflexionar sobre los seis temas de "Muchos Rostros en la Casa de Dios".

La celebracion de los muchos rostros en la casa de Dios es una forma maravillosa de conmemorar los 2000 anos desde el nacimiento de Jesucristo. Este es solo el primer paso, pero es una buena manera de empezar el nuevo milenio como el Cuerpo de Cristo. Espero verlos involucrados a nivel local y en Los Angeles. El Comite Multicultural viajara a Los Angeles para participar en este evento como representantes de la fraternidad nacional.

Paz y Bien,
Juan F. Lezcano, SFO
Coordinador Multicultural

Copias de la guia para parroquias del Encuentro 2000 a \$6.50 por copia (este incluye embarque y manipulacion) está disponible de Hispanic Affairs, 3211 Fourth Street NE, Washington, DC 20017.

A Follow-Up to the All Commissions Conference

Carol Gentile, SFO

Apostolic Commissions Coordinator

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For as in one body we have many parts, and all the parts do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually parts of one another. Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us exercise them: if prophecy, in proportion to the faith; if ministry, in ministering; if one is a teacher, in teaching; if one exhorts, in exhortation; if one contributes, in generosity; if one is over others, with diligence; if one does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

Romans 12: 4-8

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It seems like yesterday that we were all gathered together at Saint Bonaventure University during the week of June 24-27, 1999, participating in the All Commissions Conference "Forming The Body of Christ – Bringing Forth The Kingdom of God".

As your newly appointed Apostolic Commissions Coordinator, I urge you to continue to embrace the SFO Rule, Article 14: "...Build a more fraternal and evangelical world so that the Kingdom of God may be brought about more effectively".

As our Minister, Bill Wicks, requested in his opening letter to all the participants at the All Commissions Conference: "Open your minds, share your concerns, and bring the message back to your Regions, so that with the grace of God we can be what we are called to be".

God wants to equip us and lead us forth in mighty ways that will actually make history happen.

Remembering the words of Father John Bertolucci, SFO, "We are not supposed to be men and women who are letting history happen to us. We are supposed to be happening to history. God wants to equip us and lead us forth in mighty ways that will actually make history happen. We are not to wake up in the morning and allow life to just occur to us. We are to be

aggressive, outgoing, and assertive in desiring to change things in accord with the principles we have learned in the Word of God. You and I, as disciples, have a very special mission to be men and women of influence. God wants us to exert influence not only in our churches, but also in our society and in our government; in recreation; in medicine and law and other important professions. Wherever we happen to be as disciples of the Lord, we are to have influence."

According to the latest statistic received at our NAFRA Meeting on October 13, 1999 in Danville, CA, we are off and running. Four questions were asked of the Regional Ministers:

1. What has been accomplished since the All Commissions Conference?

Regional All Commissions Conferences have been presented, and several more are planned. Workshops, presentations, and retreats have been offered and planned, so that information from the All Commissions

Conference can be shared. These items are being budgeted for in the future so local fraternities have representation for all Commissions.

2. What would you like to see accomplished?

The Regional Ministers would like a National All Commissions Conference every three years, regional workshops, direct communication from the national level to the regional level, and regional to local, more practical/concrete ideas, and shared resources among commissions.

3. How was this communicated to the local level?

Twenty Regional Ministers requested that their regional chairs make presentations; others used their newsletters, e-mail, faxes, letters, or web-sites; still others assigned people to receive mail and disseminate information; others used regional gatherings/meetings.

4. Where do we go from here?

Most Regional Ministers requested that we continue the good work that was being done, and encourage local ministers to get involved.

The Apostolic Commissions Chairs would like to make a few suggestions:

- get Commission Manuals from the Regional Chair(s);
- get practical/concrete ideas from local fraternities on projects they have done in regard to the Commissions;
- publish the ideas in the regional newsletter;
- bring a copy of the regional ideas to share at the next year's NAFRA meeting;
- clarify and define some terminology (e.g. YOUFRA);
- study and understand the articles of the *Rule*, i.e. discuss the Commissions as they pertain to the needs of the world, community, church, etc.
- realize that living the Rule means living and doing the Commissions; and
- share this information with your Regional Council.

We Franciscans must continue to be the light of the world, so that God's presence can be seen through our Franciscan Charism today, tomorrow, and forever!

God bless and keep you always and forever in His care.

Carol Gentile, SFO



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NAFRA Meeting 1999

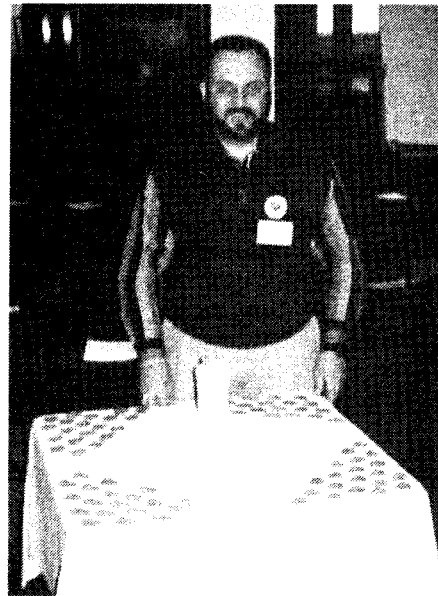


The Gathering

The National Fraternity Meeting for 1999 was held at San Damiano Retreat Center in Danville, CA, from Tuesday, October 12 to Sunday, October 17. Blessed Junipero Serra Region acted as host for the dynamic gathering, which was well-attended, and filled with the lively interaction of reunited brothers and sisters. We knew we were in for a treat when Marge Stein, SFO, Minister of Blessed Junipero Serra Region, said in her welcome, "This is California, Kids. You're gonna love it!" The theme for the meeting was *Being/Doing: A Connection?*, a concept which was discussed and examined in varied ways throughout the week.

The Meeting Begins

At the beginning of National Minister Bill Wicks' brief address on Tuesday evening, he wished us welcome and peace, and reminded everyone that this was the last NAFRA meeting of the millennium. The evening prayer service was led by Juan Lezcano, SFO, who encouraged all present to enter into a period of life-sharing and faith-sharing, and then invited everyone to select one of many terra cotta hearts, which were arranged face down on a table. Each heart had a word inscribed into it (such as "Peace", "Faith", "Surrender"). Juan asked us to think about that word during the week. At Evening Prayer on Friday, we would be asked to share what that word had meant to us.



Each of the Apostolic Commissions was responsible for planning one of our prayer times. Morning prayer on Wednesday found the sisters and brothers gathered with the Ecology Commission around the fountain in the courtyard, to praise and thank God for the gift of the new day and to join together in song. After breakfast, it was "down to business".

Down to Business

Bill Wicks, SFO, officially opened the meeting with the Opening Prayers from our *Ritual*. Bill asked for a time of silent prayer to remember our brother, Art Petit, SFO, former Minister of Saint Francis Region, who passed away earlier this year. He also expressed his gratitude to the Regional Ministers for their hospitality during his visits.

Introducing the new format for the NAFRA meeting, Bill recalled the comment made last year by Fraternal Visitor Marianne Powell, OFS, that the schedule had been "too busy". He said that the comment, coupled with a similar desire expressed by the Regional Ministers, resulted in the extra day being added to the meeting, to allow time for sharing and networking.

Bill also stated that he was disappointed with the lack of response from the Regional Ministers to the surveys distributed by the Executive Council. He reminded everyone that it is *essential* for the Regional Ministers to communicate with the Executive Council, as well as vice versa.



The Ministers' Meeting followed, which included a discussion of the All Commissions Conference, and the ways in which each Region has implemented its ideas. (See Carol Gentile's follow-up article on page seventeen.) The Ministers also heard presentations from the Ecumenical Committee, and engaged in a discussion of the next Quinquennial Congress in 2002. At the conclusion of the meeting, Pat Ball, SFO, the facilitator observed, "We have seen a great spirit of cooperation, of energy, and of great love for one another", and that "this collegial approach reflects the heart and soul of the NAFRA meeting".

Wednesday Evening Mass

On Wednesday evening, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was offered by Father Camillus MacRory, OFM Cap. During his homily, Father Camillus told us that we should live our lives with our *Rule* in one hand, and the newspaper in the other, because we must be aware of what is going on in the world in order to be able to minister to it. This, he said, is the insight of the Apostolic Commissions, which flow directly from our *Rule*. Living

the *Rule* means living the Gospel. "This is a tremendous guarantee of the Church!" Father stated emphatically, "The *Rule* is the most important thing in our lives." This is sometimes obscured by regulations, but we must *live* the *Rule* we have *promised*. We must *know* our *Rule*. We should use it as a part of our *lectio divina*. Father Camillus explained that the outside world is also made by God, and that we must be concerned with both the inside (ourselves) and the outside (the world). He exhorted us to cherish our *Rule*, and not to let anything obscure it. He recommended that we memorize it, so that we can critique all things, including our own actions, by its standard. He reminded us that each of us is responsible for nourishing our fraternity, and encouraging our brothers and sisters to love the *Rule* that we have all professed. Father shared with us that he became a Secular Franciscan at the age of sixteen; he has learned much about what the SFO is supposed to be, and this has been a big part of his formation as a friar.

The evening social found the brothers and sisters gathered in the library and courtyard for snacks, libations, and good conversation. Rumor has it that Father Camillus is a great Irish story-teller and song leader!



Carol Gentile and Father Camillus enjoy the garden at San Damiano Retreat Center

Reports Galore!

The Peace and Justice Commission led Thursday morning's prayer for the gifts of wisdom and discernment, in anticipation of the day's business.

Bill Wicks officially opened the Business Meeting with prayer and his Minister's Address, during which he spoke of the diversity of spirituality in our Order, and the need for tolerance, inclusiveness, forgiveness, and love. (Read Bill's synopsis of his address on page twenty-seven.)

Bill introduced Brother Jim Boyle, TOR, President of the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants (CNSA). He reported that there has been a networking session in Columbus, OH with the TOR Federation, with the intent of preparing Religious Sisters to become Spiritual Assistants to Secular Franciscan fraternities. He said that the September Spiritual Assistants Convocation focused on ways in which Spiritual Assistants could

better assist the regional and local fraternities. Brother Jim then reported on the progress of the decisions that were made at the 1998 Denver Convocation: Although the 1999 Congress of local Spiritual Assistants was not presented, it was decided instead to present a series of "Road Shows" during 2000 and 2001. These workshops will be presented in five areas of the country each year; a questionnaire has been developed and sent to the local Spiritual Assistants; the Life-Giving Union course is well under way; the translation of Secular Franciscan documents into other languages is progressing; a re-prioritization of the friars' apostolates has been accomplished; and representation from the Secular Franciscans has become a regular part of CNSA gatherings. Brother Jim announced that Fathers Camillus MacRory, OFM Cap and Matt Gaskin, OFM have retired as National Spiritual Assistants after many years of service to the SFO. "This is a great loss to us and the CNSA; they will be greatly missed."

Father Steve Gross, OFM Conv, speaking in tribute to Fathers Matt and Camillus, said, "Who we have learned to become with your assistance has made the difference in our Franciscan lives. Matt and Camillus, you are a tremendous blessing to our lives, and we celebrate you because of what you have been for us." Father Steve then led the assembly in singing "God Grant You Many Years", which we learned from our Byzantine brothers and sisters at last year's NAFRA meeting.

In his response, Father Camillus expressed his joy in serving the SFO and asked us to, "Please pray for the friars who work with you in life-giving union; we certainly pray for you."

National Vice-Minister Marie Amore, SFO reported on her activities as National Vocations Director. Kay Pelletier, SFO, National Secretary, reminded us that our National Statutes (Article 6(3)(d)) require the Secretary to maintain archives. Kay is currently making inquiries into how to accomplish this process, with the Graymoor Friars among others. She reported that the Executive Council is currently seeking a National Archivist, or a team, to undertake this responsibility, and also for a location to store the archives.

John Sanborn, SFO, National Treasurer, gave the Treasurer's Report, and, after lunch, the report was accepted and the budget proposals were approved.

Formation Commission Chairs' Report

Dave Ream, SFO said that his greatest personal satisfaction this year, as National Formation Commission Co-Chair, has been the success of the All Commissions Conference. He noted that working with the other Commission Chairs was a wonderful experience. Dave reported that the Formation Commission is currently reviewing Patti Normile's revision of *The Third Order Vocation*, and will update the Formation Resource List in 2000. Other projects which they are working on include an orientation handbook; translating *Catch Me a Rainbow Too!* into Spanish and Korean; *Getting to Know You*, a book to introduce Inquirers to the SFO, on which Teresa Baker, SFO and Lester Bach, OFM Cap are working; and Lota Piel's efforts to produce books on tape

for the visually impaired. He announced that the National Formation Commission will soon launch a web-page, which will include the Formation Resource Kit which was distributed at the All Commissions Conference. He and Thérèse have been re-appointed as Co-Chairs of the National Formation Commission for a term of three years.

Thérèse Ream, SFO emphasized that Formation is a *process*. She suggested that an orientation period, lasting at least four to six months, should precede the inquiry phase, which should last six to twelve months. Candidacy should last one to two years. She reminded everyone that temporary profession is not the norm, and that it should be used only in unusual circumstances. For budget reasons, Thérèse asked the Regional Ministers to consider inviting the National Formation Commission to make presentations at their Regional gatherings, to help defray the costs of National Formation Commission meetings.

Thérèse announced that the ongoing formation themes for TAU-USA in 2000 will be "Jubilee", "Pilgrimage", "Forgiveness of Debt", and "Returning Home".

Youth/Young Adult Commission Chairs' Report

Mary and Anthony Mazotti, SFO, Co-Chairs of the National Youth/Young Adult Commission, reported that they are currently developing supplemental material for the Youth Guide, copies of which have been sent to twenty-two English speaking countries. They will be contacting the thirty-five Youth/Young Adult track members from the All Commissions Conference, to develop a newsletter to communicate ideas and tips. The Youth Commission is also currently developing a web-site. Mary and Anthony have been appointed for another term as Commission Chairs.

Peace and Justice Commission Chairs' Report

Dan Mulholland, SFO, Co-Chair of the National Peace and Justice Commission, began the report by pointing out that "peace and justice issues permeate our lives". Sarah Mulholland, SFO detailed their activities last year: they have developed a Peace and Justice Manual, and assembled a Peace and Justice team; met with the OFM Peace and Justice Committee in Portland, OR and Cincinnati, OH; they have been actively involved with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund; they signed the Pax Christi New York Times advertisement promoting debt forgiveness for impoverished countries; they are re-focusing on ecumenical activities, and have begun by attending events sponsored by other branches of the Franciscan family, the Third Order Society of Saint Francis (Anglican), and the Order of Preachers (Dominicans).

Dan said that since Peace and Justice issues are often time sensitive, e-mail is becoming essential for timely communication. He wants to set up an Internet list server and a web site, which will include pages for Issues, Resources, Communications, and Contacts. It is their intent to get more involved with other Franciscan Peace and Justice groups, as well as with interfaith groups.

Ecology Commission Chair's Report

Retiring Ecology Commission Chair Charlie Spencer, SFO stated "it has been a tremendous experience to serve". He recounted the many blessings and opportunities of his term of service. He stated that there has been great growth in appreciation for ecological issues, for the integrity of creation, and for the sanctity of life. Charlie stated that his focus has been "the joy of restorative wealth that flows from God through creation", saying that nature is not a collection of objects, but a union of subjects. Charlie said that it is very difficult to say which is currently the most pressing ecological issue, because there are so many. He lamented the fact that the public is often not aware of these issues because the media is corrupted by political lobbying by the offending industries. He announced that National Wildflower Week, sponsored by NAFRA, will be May 7-13, 2000; he hopes that the sales of wildflower gardens will top 500 this year. Other things he has been working on include: promoting a historic garden restoration at San Damiano in Assisi; consultation on the Earth Charter; and establishing refuges for endangered plant species, particularly at Mount Irenaeus, NY.

Charlie then introduced incoming Ecology Commission Chair John Poppeliers, SFO (see page twenty-five for an introduction).

Family Commission Chair's Report

Carol Gentile, SFO, outgoing Family Commission Chair, reflected on the past six years. She stated that the Family Commission is a "grass roots" commission. On the local level, the Commission has focused on providing food, shelter, and clothing to the poor; on a Regional level, there has been an emphasis on helping hurting families, and the Church Assistance Program has been developed. Carol insisted that we must strive to make our fraternities real families, sharing our pain, our fear, and our trials, as well as our pleasures, dreams, and hopes. We must minister to the lonely, the sick, and the discouraged within our own fraternities, as well as outside. We become connected and bonded when we share life's journey.

Carol introduced her successors, Sonia and Jaime Bernardo, SFO, who said that they were honored and grateful for the opportunity to serve.

Presentations

Mary Mazotti presented Carol Gentile and Charlie Spencer with onyx paperweights, and expressed the thanks of the National Fraternity for their years of service as Chairs of National Commissions. Carol Gentile presented to Mary Mazotti roses and a framed certificate thanking her for eleven years of service as Apostolic Commissions Coordinator. Bill Wicks and Richard Morton presented to Gerry Rome an onyx paperweight and roses, and thanked her for her many years of dedicated service to the Order.

Work Commission Chairs' Report

Mary and Ed Zablocki, SFO, National Work Commission Chairs, reviewed the great undertaking that was the All Commissions Conference. They shared with the

assembly the enormous amount of work and love that the National Commission Chairs poured into this great event. Mary, who is a Registered Nurse and a Natural Family Planning instructor, told the group of her experiences with the young couples whom she has taught, and said that a number of them have become Inquirers at SFO fraternities.

Thursday Evening Mass

Father Richard Trezza, OFM offered the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for the Feast of Saint Callistus. In his homily, Father raised a number of important questions for us to ponder: How do we die a little more to self every day, to practice for the end of our lives? How do we show this to each other? How do we bring about peace, and not merely be "on the side of peace"? His prayer for us was that we may be able to choose a life of self-giving, and lead others to do the same.

Friday

On Friday morning, Sister Michelle Balek, OSF of Franciscans International, addressed the assembly. Sister began by outlining the history and activities of Franciscans International, which is the presence of the Franciscan Family at the United Nations, and continued by explaining the activities in which her office engages. Sister emphasized that "everyone can participate in the work of FI". Her vision is that FI is "an avenue for the voice of the poor and marginalized". In her capacity as North American Region Coordinator she works directly with the members of FI, and acts as a clearing house for information concerning the New York Office. She helps members mobilize to create change, maintains a database, and works to recruit new members. Her current efforts include networking with like-minded groups on issues such as debt cancellation, a moratorium on the death penalty, the Beijing Conference on Women, and the Hague Appeal for Peace.

For more information on Franciscans International, contact Sister Michelle Balek, OSF, 3195 South Superior Street, Milwaukee, WI 53207; Phone: 414-294-0638; Fax: 732-348-5036; E-mail: fi-noram@undp.org

Ongoing Formation

All SFO fraternity meetings should include Ongoing Formation, and the National Fraternity meeting is no exception. Brother Jim Reiter, OFM Conv conducted the Ongoing Formation session. Read about it on page twelve.

Multicultural Report

Juan Lezcano, SFO, reported on his activities as Multicultural Coordinator. He has discerned that there is a need to move from a single multicultural coordinator to a committee. Juan proposed that this committee would include a representative from each of the Asian, Hispanic, Black, Native American, Pacific Islander, and White communities.

Fraternal Life Committee Report

Gerry Rome, SFO, gave the Fraternal Life Committee Report, stating that the bulk of the work of the Committee has centered on conflict resolution., and

suggested that regions may want to set up their own conflict resolution teams. She announced that a resource book is in the planning stage.

CIOFS Councilor Report

Laura Haukaas, SFO, Councilor to CIOFS, reported that she has received from the National Council proposals for the revision of the Constitutions of the SFO. Laura will have taken these recommendations to present at the General Chapter in Madrid, Spain, on October 23-31, 1999.

The proposals that are expected to have the greatest effect on the International Council and on the United States concern the structure of the International Council, the role of Spiritual Assistants and Animators, our relationship to the Franciscan Youth, visitations, requirements for the election of officers, and formation. Any changes to the General Constitutions will require changes to the International Statutes, which will also be done at the General Chapter. Such revisions will also require changes to our National Statutes.

In response to a request from our General Minister, Emanuela De Nunzio, who could not attend the All Commissions Conference, copies of the six Commission Manuals were sent to her, and to the English-speaking Councilor, Marianne Powell of Denmark.

Due to a generous grant from the Duns Scotus Trust Fund, an order has been sent to Barbo-Carlson Publishing to send formation materials to countries in need. This resource material will be of great help to those who do not have sufficient financial resources, or whose formation programs have not yet developed formation books.

The financial status of our International Office continues to be a problem. Only 38 of 54 National Fraternities paid the requested twenty cents per member. A total of \$63,402.00 was received by the Presidency, with expenses of \$56,361.00. Annual per capita contributions to CIOFS should total \$90,000.00. This does not include any expenses that will be incurred due to the General Chapter Meeting, the cost of which is estimated to be \$93,300.00. Each nation is "assessed" according to their membership (\$2,500.00 for the US). Through the continuing generosity of the Capuchins, an office is provided for the Presidency, but the Capuchins would like to have the space for their own use. Only ten donors have contributed to a center for the Presidency. Our General Minister, Emanuela De Nunzio, has pleaded for each member of the Order to donate fifty cents, so that an office and equipment could be acquired. At our October 1998 NAFRA meeting, the Regional Ministers were asked to present this request to their members. A request was also made in the summer issue of TAU-USA.

Laura further reported that End of Year Reports were received from thirteen of the thirty-one regions. She continues to receive newsletters from the regions; these are helpful tools for her to determine the status of the Order in the USA.

Further Agenda Items

Additions to the agenda included presentations by Kathy Taormina, SFO on the Commissions logo; National Public Relations Director Al Kath, SFO; Carol Gentile, SFO on Peace Week; Frances Wicks, SFO on the Yosemite Experience; and the Editors of TAU-USA.

Friday evening, during the full council meeting, Gloria Jean Staley, SFO, Minister of Divine Mercy Region, reported on the minutes of the Ministers' meeting. The following motions were passed: the annual Peace Award will be re-instituted; a committee was formed to establish the criteria for the Award; the Ecumenical Committee will continue their study for a period of one year; next year the Regional Ministers will have a meeting period without an agenda, to allow for a more relaxed atmosphere for caucusing; the meeting will be restructured, so that, henceforth, there will be an Open Forum, with the National Minister presiding; and the budget was discussed and approved.

Next year's meeting will be held October 17 to 22, 2000 at Mother Boniface Center in Philadelphia, with Blessed Katharine Drexel Region hosting.

NAFRA will celebrate a Chapter of Elections in 2000. The Nominations Committee, chaired by Christine Hassett, SFO, includes Gloria Jean Staley, SFO, Mary Ann Julian, SFO, Deacon Oscar Perez, SFO, and Marge Stein, SFO.

Saturday



Photo by Al Kath, SFO

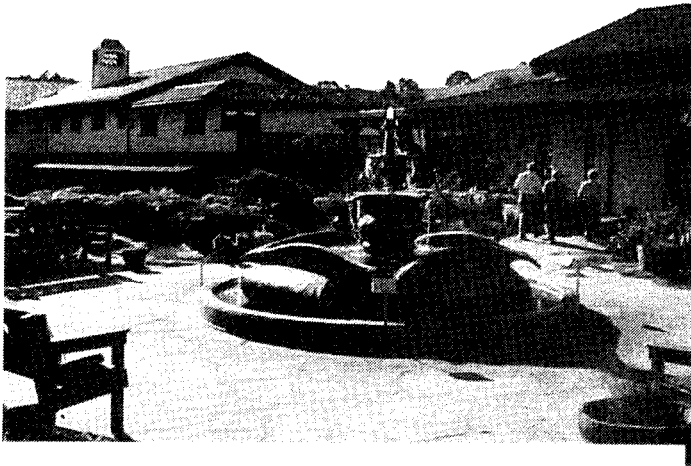
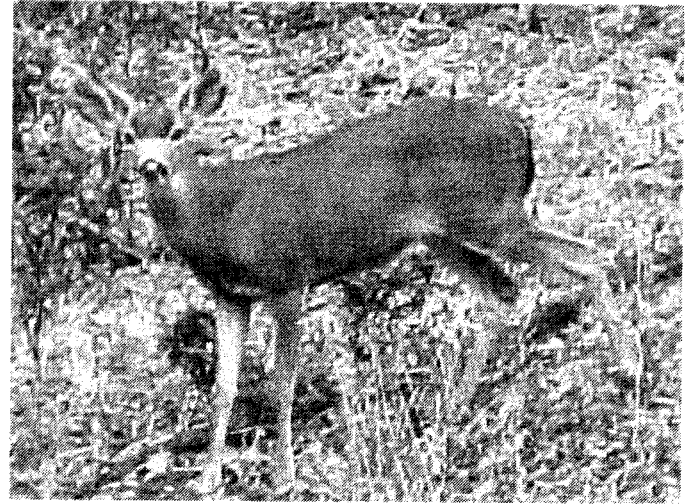
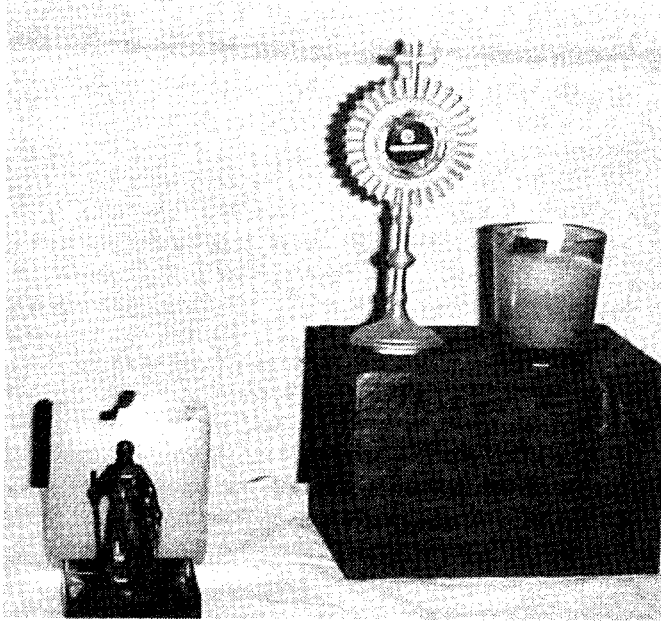
On Saturday morning, everyone gathered for picture-taking, before preparing to depart for the "Day Away". The highlights of the day included Mass celebrated by Father Stephen Gross, OFM Conv. at the newly dedicated National Shrine of Saint Francis in San Francisco. Mass was followed by dinner at the Empress of China restaurant in Chinatown.

Sunday

Although many of the brothers and sisters caught midnight flights home, the small group that remained gathered in the Fireside Lounge for an informal circle discussion, and reflected upon the events of the week. After cheerful farewells, everyone departed for home.

One more thing... *"Juan, tell us a story!"*

NAFRA Meeting Scrapbook



Clockwise from top left: We were privileged to have in our presence a relic and statuette of Blessed Junipero Serra, which was loaned to us by our host region; we had a visit from "Brother Deer"; the brothers and sisters gather for Morning Prayer; the sun shining through the bay trees, over the valley; the stream which runs through the courtyard at San Damiano; the fountain in the courtyard. (Photos by Mr and Mrs Antony Outhwaite, SFO)

A Note from Brother Jim

Friar James Boyle, TOR

President, Conference of National Spiritual Assistants
P.O. Box 180, Loretto, PA 15940-0180
814-471-0371; e-mail: boyleja@juno.com

G.K. Chesterton, a noted author of this century known for his poetry and short stories, tells us about an incident that happened to him when he was a young man.

At the age of eighteen, full of vigor and love for his native England, he decided one day that he was going to set sail in search of land that he could claim for England. Shortly after he set sail, with the Union Jack on board, he runs into a storm, and, due (as he later admitted) to miscalculations, he somehow, unknowingly, landed back in England. The place where he landed was a deserted stretch, and, not knowing that he was in England, he planted the Union Jack and claimed the area for his country. When he finally realized his mistake, and saw that he landed in an area of England that he was seeing for the first time, he realized that his eyes were being opened to something that he had never before experienced.

When we read the life of Saint Francis, we are struck by the fact that, as a young man, he lived life rather recklessly. He showered the youth of Assisi with many worldly goods, things that, at the time, he felt to be important for life. He saw what the world of his day had to offer, and wanted to share in it. He yearned for knighthood. He wanted to be favored by an earthly king, who, if his quest was successful, he would grant him favors. The town of Assisi would be his; the people of Assisi would pour accolades upon him. As the son of a wealthy cloth merchant, the world would be at his feet.

Before his conversion, the sight of the leper would have been abhorrent to him. People were to be used, and then discarded once they were no longer useful. After his conversion, Francis began to see that town where he lived with different eyes. The town certainly had not changed physically. The people were still the same. Why was there now a difference? There were still lepers, but now he was able to embrace them. People were not to be used or discarded because of age or physical differences. He now saw all these people as children of God. He found his new life in the Gospels of Jesus Christ, which showed what the Lord Jesus Christ wanted him to do.

When we made our profession as Franciscans, as followers of Jesus Christ in the footsteps of Francis, we were to have our eyes opened to see our surroundings in a new light. We were to bring the message of Christ to the world, and, in doing so, to create a new world. We were to see all people as our sisters and brothers. We were to help the elderly of the world; they were not to be discarded because they were considered useless. The poor were our brothers and sisters, not people to be ignored as worthless. We were no longer to accept the values of the world, but bring the values of Christ to the world. Like our Father Francis, we were to see Christ in all people, and have respect for these people, because

they were children of God, and we could see Christ present within them. Because each of these people had a dignity, a worth, they were to be loved and respected.

In writing about Francis, Chesterton states:

He, Francis, only saw the image of God multiplied but not monotonous. To Him a man was always a man and did not disappear in a dense crowd any more than in a desert. He honored all men; that is, he not only loved but respected them all. What gave him his extraordinary personal power was this; that from the Pope to the beggar, from the Sultan of Syria in his pavilion to the rugged nobles crawling out of the woods, there was never a man who looked into those brown eyes without being certain that Francis Bernardone was really interested in him; in his own inner individual life from the cradle to the grave; that he himself was being valued and taken seriously, and not merely added to the spoils of some social policy or the names in some clerical document.

As followers of Francis, let us see Christ in all people, and work together to bring the world around to Christ.



Requiescat in Pace

Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death, from whom no one living can escape.... Blessed are those whom death will find in Your most holy will, for the second death shall do them no harm. Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks and serve Him with great humility.

Saint Francis of Assisi

- † Our sister, Geraldine Rome, SFO, returned to the Lord on Thursday, November 11, 1999. Most recently, Jerry served the Order on the Fraternal Life Committee, and on the Board of Trustees of the Duns Scotus Trust Fund. Family and friends gathered to celebrate Jerry's life on Monday, November 15, 1999, at Saint George Church in Baton Rouge, LA.
- † Our brother, Waldemar Augustin Roebuck, SFO returned to the Lord on November 1, 1999. Wally was elected President of the North American Federation in 1967. Wally's Funeral Mass was offered at Saint Francis of Assisi Church in New York City.

Our brother and sister were washed clean in Baptism, and nourished with the Body and Blood of the Lord in the Eucharist. As Secular Franciscans they were united more closely with the Lord and with us through the observance of our way of life. As they strove to follow this Rule of Life, may the Lord now take them to Himself, and grant them a place among His saints in glory.

from the Secular Franciscan Wake Service

Work Commissioner Chair Needed

The National Executive Council invites Secular Franciscans to submit resumés for the position of **National Work Commission Chair**. Applicants must:

- have active Secular Franciscan status (must provide copy of Certificate of Profession);
- be familiar with the Mission Statement and goals of the Work Commission;
- be able to communicate, educate, and motivate regions and fraternities on Work;
- provide quarterly on-going Formation articles for TAU-USA;
- provide a summary of personal experience on the local or regional Work Commission; and
- be able to attend at least two four-day national meetings yearly.

Interested Secular Franciscans should mail resumés by March 1, 2000 to:

Carol Gentile, SFO
Coordinator, National Apostolic Commissions
136 Woods Avenue
Monaca, PA 15061
Phone 724-775-4248
E-mail: gentilesfo@hotmail.com



National Archivist Needed



The National Executive Council invites qualified Secular Franciscans to submit resumés for the position of **National Fraternity Archivist**. This is a volunteer position. Applicants must:

- have active Secular Franciscan status (must provide copy of Certificate of Profession);
- provide a list of experiences as an archivist; and
- include a telephone number for a personal interview.

Interested Secular Franciscans should mail resumés by February 1, 2000 to:

Mary Mazotti, SFO
National Executive Council
P.O. Box 2571
Arnold, CA 95223-2571
Phone: 209-795-3809
E-mail: mkmaz@goldrush.com

Introducing...



Photo by Al Kath, SFO

John Poppeliers, SFO Incoming National Ecology Commission Chair

The National Executive Council announces the appointment of John Poppeliers, SFO as Chair of the National Ecology Commission. John was born in Binghamton, NY, and married his wife, Julia, in 1967. They currently reside in Washington, DC.

John attended the School of Architecture at Syracuse University, the University of Pennsylvania, and Catholic University of America, where he received his PhD in 1975. The title of his dissertation was "Historiographic Development in the History of Architecture". John is the International Liaison Officer for Cultural Resources for the US National Park Services. He also served as the Chief of Operations and Training for the Division of Cultural Heritage at UNESCO. This section of UNESCO is responsible for international campaigns to safeguard monuments and sites, and also for the training of conservators and restorers.

Among the many awards John has received are the Fulbright-Hayes Research Grant for study at the University of Vienna, a graduate assistantship at Catholic University, and a graduate fellowship at the University of Pennsylvania. He is a professional affiliate in the American Institute of Architects, and a member of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. He serves as a representative for executive and consultative committees for the international campaigns to safeguard Moenjodaro (Pakistan), Göreme and Istanbul (Turkey), and Tyre (Lebanon).

John is the author of numerous publications dealing with architecture and architectural preservation, and has lectured extensively. His work has been the subject of several exhibitions. John is active as a volunteer in a number of charitable causes, and enjoys painting and music.

A Year in the Life of Franciscan Youth

Donna Sinclair, Past Advisor, Franciscan Youth Group,
Padua Franciscan High School, Parma OH

Past advisor Donna Sinclair has entered the religious community of the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany, New York, and is a Candidate in Formation. She is presently serving in the Youth Ministry program of Saint Francis of Assisi Parish in Beach Haven, NJ.

The Franciscan Youth Group at Padua Franciscan High School in Parma, OH was established in the early 1990s by then Campus Minister Brother Thom Smith, OFM, who now serves the community of Quincy University as Campus Minister. In the early years, the primary function of the monthly gatherings was to provide the students with information on the life and teachings of Saint Francis of Assisi. As the years passed, the task of educating the students was absorbed by the Theology Department's curriculum. Monthly Franciscan Youth Group gatherings became a time to gather for prayer, share insights, and plan service projects together. Here is an overview of the school year just past:

Students gathered for prayer at each monthly meeting, with each prayer service and discussion focusing on an awareness of God in all creation.

During October's meeting, Halloween boxes of candy and treats were packed and shipped to Tau House in New Orleans.

In November, we visited the new Wolf Wilderness at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. The prayer service included a reading of the story of Francis and the wolf of Gubbio.

During December's meeting, we packed stockings with gifts and cards, which were later shipped to the pediatric AIDS unit of Tulane University Medical Center. Members also participated in Padua's Annual Christmas For Others program, a \$25,000 fund-raiser for various area organizations, such as Habitat for Humanity. They also helped with the canned food drive.

In April, we visited Saint Stanislas Franciscan Church in the old Polish neighborhood of Cleveland. The pastor gave the students a very interesting tour of the newly renovated church, and then joined the group for dinner in a Polish restaurant in the neighborhood. Even though the restaurant was expecting us, the thirty-five members put a strain on the staff – so the students pitched in to pour coffee for patrons and clear tables. When the group prepared to leave, an elderly diner stood to congratulate them on their exemplary behavior, and the entire restaurant gave them a round of applause!

Our annual retreat was held in May, and included nature walks, prayer, reflection time, the movie *Assisi Underground*. The weekend concluded with liturgy offered outdoors by Father Walter Dolan, OFM, President of Padua Franciscan High School.

The final activity of the year was our annual Promise Ceremony in early June, during which students who have attended special formation gatherings promise to follow the teachings and example of Saint Francis in the coming year.

It Takes People and Resources

Anthony and Mary Mazotti, SFO
Chairs, National Youth/Young Adult Commission
P.O. Box 2571, Arnold, CA 94223-2571
209-795-3809; e-mail: mkmaz@goldrush.com

Judging by the stories and happy youthful faces in diocesan newspapers, there is definitely a renewal of ministry to adolescents going on in the Church. Secular Franciscan Youth/Young Adult Leaders are in luck, because of the current availability of workshops on Youth Ministry. Four members of the National Youth Commission took advantage of Catholic Youth Leader Conferences around the country, sponsored by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. If you are just starting a Franciscan Youth Group, look around to see what programs have been planned by your diocese in the area of youth development and leadership training. Try to attend one of these.

The evangelization of Franciscan Youth is an SFO vocation. The National Youth Commission presented a first-time Franciscan Youth workshop, as part of the All Commissions Conference last June, and will be planning Regional workshops in the future. Still, we can learn much in the meantime from Church-sponsored programs on Youth. Keep in mind, though, that Secular Franciscan Youth Ministry has a "specific organization, methods of formation, and teaching methods". As a component of the Franciscan Family, Franciscan Youth is expected to have spiritual and pastoral assistance from Franciscan Religious or animators, and guidance from competent Secular leaders.

In looking through resource books on Catholic Youth Ministry, the keywords most often used were "teamwork" and task-assigned "coordinators". Teams of resourceful people provide a greater range of expertise in preparing Franciscan Youth for their spiritual journey, especially in the area of the Apostolic Commissions found in the *Rule* of the SFO, which is their inspiration. All the books cautioned Youth Leaders about "burnout" and recommended that regular time be set aside for quiet and prayer. The need for inspired leaders is great. The Commission encourages Seculars to give it a try.



Secular Franciscan Ordained Bishop

Deacon Richard Arsenault, SFO

An honor for the Diocese of Saint Augustine, Florida, for the Saint Augustine Fraternity (Five Franciscan Martyrs Region), and for the entire Secular Franciscan Order.

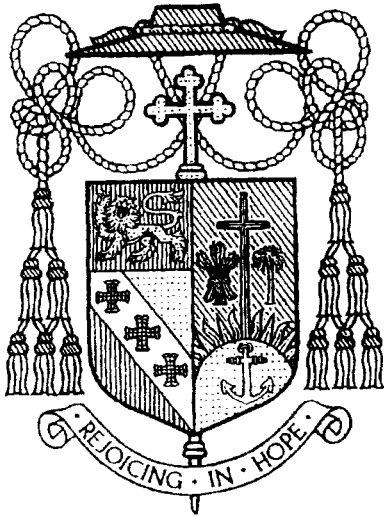
On September 29, 1999 Father Robert Baker, SFO, former Spiritual Assistant to the Saint Augustine (Florida) Fraternity, was ordained Bishop of Charleston, South Carolina, following his appointment to the hierarchy by His Holiness Pope John Paul II, on July 13, 1999.

Father Baker had graciously agreed to be the local Spiritual Assistant when the Conventual Friars left the Diocese, and he continued to serve in that capacity until his transfer to Christ the King Parish in Jacksonville, Florida in 1997.

An Ohio native, Bishop Baker was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Saint Augustine by Bishop Paul Tanner in 1970. Among his assignments were: associate pastor, Saint Paul on the Beach; Administrator, Saint Augustine Parish and Catholic Student Center in Gainesville, Florida; pastor, Cathedral-Basilica of Saint Augustine; and pastor, Christ the King

parish in Jacksonville. His teaching career included Bishop Kenny High School, the University Catholic Center, and, after further doctoral studies and degrees in Rome, professor of Sacramental

Theology at the Florida Regional Seminary of Saint Vincent de Paul in Boynton Beach. The faithful of the Saint Augustine Diocese will always remember



Bishop Baker for his great zeal and compassion for the less fortunate. He helped establish two Saint Francis Shelters and Soup Kitchens in Gainesville and Saint Augustine, and the Saint Vincent de Paul Farm on State Route 16 for recovering addicts. Furthermore, his ministry at the State Prison in Starke, especially to the inmates on death row demonstrates his vehement opposition to the electric chair and to the death penalty itself.

The members of the Saint Augustine Fraternity recall Bishop Baker's efforts to be present at their monthly meetings in the Cathedral Parish Center, and the inspirational messages he always had ready for them on those occasions.

May our thanks and congratulations to Bishop Robert Baker be accompanied by a promise to keep him in our prayers as he embarks on his new ministry as the Shepherd to the Catholic faithful of the Diocese of Charleston.

Where Will We Meet?

Bill Wicks, SFO, National Minister

There is a diversity of spirituality in our Order, much like there is in our church. This diversity must be respected. I am amazed at the diversity that our church accepts today. Many of you who are my age recall the negative attitudes that we once harbored regarding other religions, even other Christian religions. As kids, we laughed at the Pentecostals, and we wondered if our Protestant friends were going to make it to heaven. I interviewed a Franciscan Sister at Redwood City California recently, who said that at the time that she took her vows she wasn't allowed to use Contemplative Prayer. Now we have Pentecostal Charismatic Catholics, lay men and women who use prayer of contemplation. We have conservatives, liberals, reactionaries, revisionists, etc., etc., etc. We have those who want us all to return to the Tridentine Mass, and those who would like to have Mass on the beach with liturgical music by the Beach Boys. We now have a big tent, a big tent. Thank God. I strongly endorse the words of Saint Augustine who said, "Unity in the essentials, diversity in the nonessentials, charity for all" - - charity for all, charity for all. I can't repeat that phrase enough. Sometimes I don't see charity. Sometimes I see bickering. We are so quick to separate ourselves from those who think differently from us, or those we judge to be sinners. To wrap it all up in one statement: we judge, we judge. Mother Teresa tells us that "When we Judge, we have no time to Love". Love is the only way to break through those limitations with which we are all inflicted.

Marianne Williamson, in her book "The Healing Of America", quotes from the words of a Persian poet who lived over 700 years ago. It says in effect: do not judge, but attempt to create a loving climate. The quote is: "Out beyond ideas of wrong doing and right doing, there is a field. I'll meet you there." We need to go to that field where it doesn't matter what our politics are - before something happens to force us there. We must evolve to the point where we come together in fraternity, because to do so is the reason we are fraternity. Our long term good depends on our finding our way past thought forms of conflict and separation, to thought forms of peace and love. It is in that field beyond our differences where we find God. Let us go there, and pray together.



The Magic People have not been invited to attend the party in the world, for fear that they might dance.

They have not been invited to speak at the party, for fear that they might sing.

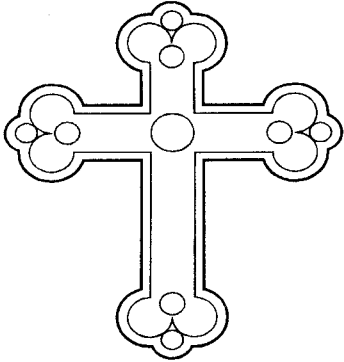
They have not been invited to run the party, for fear that they might change it.

Let's not wait for an invitation. Let's dance, and sing, and change things.

Marianne Williamson, *The Healing of America*

A Brief History of the Eastern Churches Region – Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Ann Devine, SFO



The Eastern Churches Region, Exaltation of the Holy Cross, traces its history and foundation to the first two fraternities founded under the direction of the friars of the Custody of Saint Mary of the Angels. These fraternities were Holy Dormition Fraternity in Sybertsville, Pennsylvania, and Holy Protection Fraternity in New Canaan, Connecticut. Both of these fraternities were established in the 1940's, and formed the basis of the Third Order Province of Saint Mary of the Angels, which became part of the North American Federation in February of 1966.

These fraternities were canonically established within the context of the Eastern Catholic Churches. For those unfamiliar with the Eastern Catholic Churches, they are those Catholic Churches who follow the rites which arise from the Alexandrian, Antiochene, Armenian, Chaldean, and Constantinopolitan traditions. In the Catholic Church, these groups of Christian faithful are united by a hierarchy, according to the norm of law which the supreme authority of the Church expressly or tacitly recognizes as *sui iuris*. As such, they are called Churches *sui iuris*, and have their own ecclesiastical structure, law, spirituality and liturgical tradition. Pope John Paul II, in his letter *Orientalis Lumen* (1995), recognized the importance of these Churches for the entire Catholic Church when he said: "we believe that the venerable and ancient tradition of the Eastern churches is an integral part of the heritage of Christ's Church". He further hoped "that the full manifestation of the Church's catholicity be restored to the Church and to the world, expressed not by a single tradition and still less by one community in opposition to the other, and that we too may all be granted a full taste of the divinely revealed and undivided heritage of the church, which is preserved and grows in the life of the churches of the East as in those of the West.

Following the promulgation of the Pauline Rule, and the subsequent changes on the National level, work began on bringing the Third Order Province of Saint Mary of the Angels to a full fraternal life as expressed in the Rule. In 1981, June Carpenter, SFO was appointed as Secular Franciscan Provincial Minister. Shortly after this, on November 7, 1982, the Provincial Fraternity of Saint

Mary of the Angels was established, in order to consolidate the bonds of communion, collaboration, and coordination among the local fraternities, and to be a voice for the Secular Franciscans of the Province on the National level.

During this time, two new fraternities were also established: Holy Protection Fraternity in North Royalton, Ohio (October 28, 1980) and Saint Clare Fraternity in Saint Clair, Pennsylvania (July 15, 1985)

When the issue of regionalization was addressed by the National Fraternity, our then Province applied for the establishment of an Eastern Churches Region. Given its unique ecclesiastical status and needs, this request was granted, and, on October 29, 1993, the National Fraternity established the Eastern Churches Region – Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

Since that time, our Region continues to grow. Currently there are three fraternities, an emerging group in Tuscon, Arizona, and several other possibilities for fraternities in the future (in Pennsylvania, Arizona, and Nevada). Our mission as Secular Franciscans within the Eastern Churches remains "to bring to life the Secular Franciscan charism within the context of the living tradition of the Eastern Churches".

For more information concerning the Eastern Churches Region, please contact:

Eastern Churches Region
Exaltation of the Holy Cross
P.O. Box 270
Sybertsville, PA 18251



Yosemite Nature Experience - 2000

Believe me when I say that Yosemite National Park is the most beautiful place of God's creation in the entire world, and every Franciscan should visit Yosemite at least once in their lifetime. There are presently only three lodge rooms and six cabins (with bath) available for the Yosemite Nature Experience, which will take place from May 7th to May 14th, 2000. If you are interested, please e-mail Frances Wicks, SFO at sfofrancis@aol.com, or write Frances at 3307 Quail Meadows Drive, Santa Maria, CA 93455, for more information. I'll leave you with the words of John Muir, a naturalist who frequented Yosemite National Park:

"Come to the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you ... while cares will drop off like autumn leaves."

God give you peace!
Frances

Do You Know the Story Behind the Clothing You Buy??

Pauline Cahalan, SFO

Member of the National Work Commission

How many of us think about the working conditions and lives of the people who make the clothing we buy, as we stroll through a department store, or go through racks looking for just the right item? For most of us, it probably doesn't cross our minds very often. The purpose of this article is to make more real, to those of us in America, the working conditions of those who make clothing for just two companies. As most of you know, U.S. clothing companies take their operations to third world countries with poor labor laws, no unions, and no one to enforce any kind of environmental laws within the work place.

I receive literature from the National Labor Committee. This organization tries to bring to the attention of consumers in the U.S conditions that exploit workers. By making American consumers more aware of negative foreign working conditions, the NLC's ultimate goal is to pressure companies to pay their workers a respectful wage that elevates them above the poverty level, and to treat their workers with respect and dignity. The process which the National Labor Committee advocates is one of consumer pressure on company management to change their policies from the top down.

In these sweatshop conditions, the temperatures are frequently 100 degrees or more.

Let me give you a few of the facts that I have received recently, so you can get a better idea of the current conditions. In the National Labor Committee's publication "Fired for Crying to the Gringos", I learned that the Liz Claiborne company has been using factories in El Salvador to sew their clothing since 1992. Most of the employees in these factories are women, many of

them single mothers. In these sweatshop conditions, the temperatures are frequently 100 degrees or more. Two months after they start employment, women *must* pay to have a pregnancy test done. If it is positive they are fired. The drinking water, their only source of fluids in this dehydrating environment, is dirty and bad tasting. Workers are allowed only one timed bathroom break per shift. There is mandatory overtime, with shifts up to 15½ hours long during the busy season. If they refuse to work overtime, they are fired. There are excessively high production goals, with each person expected to sew 60 to 80 pieces per hour. The base wage in these oppressive factories is 60¢ per hour. This meets less than one third of the cost of living the most meager existence. The workers are denied health care and sick days. Liz Claiborne's Code of Conduct is posted on the wall, but not followed.

In "Wal-Mart's Shirts of Misery", also a National Labor Committee publication, I learned that a shirt I purchase in Wal-Mart is made by a young woman in Bangladesh, who is forced to work from 7:30am to 8:00pm, seven

days a week, paid just 9¢ to 20¢ per hour, and is denied health care and maternity leave. She is screamed at to work faster, has only monitored bathroom visits, and works with the tension and fear of being fired for complaining, or trying to organize, in order to make that shirt. In Bangladesh, the labor code supposedly mandates that workers be allowed one full day off per week, and be paid double their standard wage for overtime. However, both factory management and Wal-Mart consistently violate these laws with impunity. Workers are paid \$16.00 for an 80 hour week, instead of the \$36.00 they should be able to take home for the hours they work. Bangladesh is an incredibly poor country. Wal-Mart insists that they will not locate factories in Bangladesh unless there are no taxes assessed on their products or facilities. In 1998 Wal-Mart's sales amounted to \$137.6 billion. That is thirty-six times greater than the total revenues of the Bangladeshi government. Not one cent of taxes on that money stayed in this desperately poor country!!!

Consumers in America must rise up and protest companies doing business in these dehumanizing ways. The message we need to send to these companies is that, as their customers, we have clout because of our purchasing power. These companies must understand, implement, and enforce a corporate philosophy from the top down, that all people involved in any part of any process that results in company revenue *must* be treated with respect and dignity.

I emphasize that simply boycotting is not the solution, as companies will just close their current plants in these desperately poor countries and move elsewhere. We must contact them, and insist upon a change in corporate culture, that will, ultimately, bring long-lasting reform to their current practices. To contact Liz Claiborne, please write or call Paul R. Charron, Chairman of the Board and CEO, Liz Claiborne, Inc., 1441 Broadway, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10018; phone 212-626-3231; fax 212-626-3416. To contact Wal-Mart, please write or call David Glass, President and CEO, Wal-Mart, 702 SW 8th Street, Bentonville, AR 72716; phone 501-273-4000; fax 501-273-4894; e-mail letters@wal-mart.com. The National Labor Committee address is 275 Seventh Avenue, 15th Floor, New York, NY 10001; phone 212-242-3002; fax 212-242-3821; e-mail nlc@nlcnet.org to be put on their mailing list.

To paraphrase Francis of Assisi, may the Lord show you what work is yours to do.



Spiritual Assistants Convocation



Photo by Carol Gentile, SFO and Bill Wicks, SFO

The annual meeting of the Provincial and Regional Spiritual Assistants to the Secular Franciscan Order was held September 21-24, 1999, in Burlingame, CA. The theme was "Ecclesial, Franciscan, Apostolic: SFO Commissions and Committees". Making presentations as representatives of the SFO were Bill Wicks, SFO, Carol Gentile, SFO, and Mary and Anthony Mazotti, SFO.

Carol Gentile, the recently appointed Apostolic Commissions Coordinator, presented the mission statements and goals of the Apostolic Commissions; National Commission Chairs' accomplishments on local, regional, national, and international levels; and reported extensively on the goals and successes of the All Commissions Conference. Bill Wicks gave an overview of the Formation Commission, Fraternal Life Committee, and the Ecumenical Committee; and gave a report on "The State of the SFO in 1999".

Mary Mazotti gave the keynote address, entitled "We are Ecclesial, Franciscan, Apostolic: the Role of the Commissions in SFO Life".

Following is a synopsis of Mary's address:

My presentation today could very well be called a sequel to my contribution last year, which detailed the successes of the National Apostolic Commissions. This year, I will give you a brief history of their "ups and downs", roadblocks and successes, and our hopes for our Order and the Commissions.

As Coordinator of the National Commissions for the past eleven years, I have watched the Commissions grow from a seedling vision into the full-bloom prophetic voice that they were meant to become. Please know that any praising and bragging we may do this week about the work of the National Commissions is meant as a positive

reflection on you (Spiritual Assistants), who have provided the Seculars with so much nurturing and support over the years.

In the early stages of the National Apostolic Commissions, their attempts to fulfill their role of motivating the regions, to get them to accept the Commissions, was almost at a standstill. The main reason was that the Ministers had their hands full with Regionalization. Overall, the Regionalization process took six years. Most Commission information coming down the "pipeline" from NAFRA lay dormant.

It was during this lull that I became fascinated with books on "Corporate Management". I started buying and reading these books with an eye open to ways of promoting the Commissions more effectively, to see why some companies succeeded, while others suffered, broke up, merged, or went bankrupt. I was looking for clues and fresh new ways to encourage the gifted and motivated Commission Chairs.

To ease my conscience for spending so much time and money on materialistic subjects, I looked for Scriptural support that what I was doing was okay. I found it in Matthew's account of the "Parable of the Silver Pieces" (Matthew 25:14-30). I reasoned that the money and time given to me was a trust from God to invest, to bring Him and his Kingdom profit. This would equate me with the "industrious and reliable servant". (Of course, I would get bigger responsibilities.) We know what happened to the third party, who buried his silver pieces – he was called a "worthless, lazy lout" and thrown out. This was proof enough for me. Altogether, I read more than ten books, including *Leadership Secrets of Attila the Hun*, a metaphor on leadership, filled with satire and wisdom, by Wes Roberts, Ph.D.

For me, they all boiled down to five key themes: commitment, perseverance, eyes on the spiritual goal, prayer, and fasting. I did find a few words of wisdom in the "Attila the Hun" book with which I agreed:

"You must have a passion to succeed – a passion that drives you to prepare your Huns", and "Chieftains should encourage their subordinate Huns to use creativity to fulfill delegated responsibility".

The SFO National Executive Council has always allowed the Commission Chairs to be flexible and creative, with a little guidance from the Coordinator and their Mission Statements, Goals, and Job Descriptions.

There were, however, stipulations to guide the writing of their "Statements and Goals". They had to be Scripture-based (especially in the Gospels); ecclesial (in line with Church teachings and documents); referenced to the *Rule*; and rooted in Francis (how did Francis live out the apostolic commissions?)

Since living the Commissions is mandated in our Rule, it is the role of each Commission Chair, along with the Formation Commission, to help Secular Franciscans to live out this mandate. They have done this by providing on-going formation articles in *TAU-USA*; by recommending reading materials; through e-mail, the telephone, and letter-writing; and by accepting invitations to speak. Similar efforts are now emerging on the Regional level.

The role of the Commissions in the life of Secular Franciscans is to make clearer to them the areas of the apostolic focus. Every Secular Franciscan has the mandate to live the apostolic life, in imitation of Christ and our Father Francis.

Each of the National Commission Chairs have spent three or more years assembling Resource Manuals for their Commissions. Each manual had to incorporate, as its primary content, Ecclesial, Franciscan, and Apostolic sources as support for the Commission, in addition to the *Rule*, a copy of their Mission Statement and Goals, suggestions for organizing a regional or local fraternity commission, a bibliography, and a list of resources.

The organizational structure of the Commissions on the national and regional levels is well-ordered for efficiency and efficacy:

- Each National Commission Chair has the assistance of three to five members, and an invited National Spiritual Assistant to advise them and to journey with them.
- The channel of communication between the Chairs and the National Executive Council is the appointed Apostolic Commissions Coordinator. (This is the position held by me, and will be passed on to the very capable Carol Gentile in October).
- The Chairs and the Coordinator meet with the National Executive Council twice a year, to report on their activities and projects. The Commission reports are an important part of the agenda during our annual NAFRA meetings.

- Of late, each Commission has had an annual budget of \$3,000.00.
- Each Chair serves a term of three years, with a possible reappointment to serve a second term. One year before the second term expires, the upcoming vacancy is published in *TAU-USA*. Applications are received by the National Coordinator, who schedules a telephone interview with the applicant. Notes from the interview, along with the resumés, are sent to the Executive Council, which selects and appoints the new Chair(s). As of our October meeting, there will be five husband and wife "teams" as Co-chairs of the National Commissions, including Youth and Formation.

By working together, the Commissions serve as a prophetic voice, telling us who we are as Secular Franciscans, what we need to become, and what we ought to do as the Secular Franciscans of the USA – by the Grace of God the Father, His Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

The vision of the SFO gets clearer year by year. But many have not yet claimed it as their own personal vision, as did Francis, who saw his mission as a direct call from God.

Leadership remains fragile in some areas. The basic understanding of Steward Leadership is still hazy. We are working on this; we have the Formation materials, manuals, and handbooks available now for each Commission, as well as the *Handbook For Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership*.

Leaders need to search out new ways, or combinations of ways, to create a sense of urgency and passion – to think in a focused manner, as did Saint Paul about his goals. There is hope on the horizon in this area.

All of the Apostolic Commission Chairs, together with the Formation and Youth Commission Chairs, spent more than two years in the process of putting together the very successful national All Commissions Conference at Saint Bonaventure University. We focused on our interconnectedness, and "Forming the Body of Christ – Bringing Forth the Kingdom of God".

All Secular Franciscans should be eager spokespersons for the vision of our Order; they must know it and understand it. If we don't think in these terms, and if we don't interact as co-partners with Franciscan Religious in our common Mission, we will all go into the early years of the new millennium without any life within us. It is important for any organization to know where it is heading. Thus far, the Secular Franciscan Order has mission statements and goals, a rule and constitutions, excellent formation materials, our rituals and our manuals. What is lacking? I will let words of wisdom from "Attila the Hun" answer: "The greatness of a Hun is measured by the sacrifice he is willing to make for the good of the Nation." Change "Nation" to "Order".

Thank you!

Franciscans International Intervention

*United Nations Framework Convention
on Climate Change - COP5*

*High Level Segment - Bonn, Germany
November 2, 1999*

*presented by Charles Spencer, SFO,
Councilor for Ecology, Franciscans International*

Mr. President, members of the Assembly, and colleagues from the NGO community, the Franciscans International COP5 delegation is grateful for this opportunity.

Franciscans International includes Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, and Ecumenical Franciscans, and friends from 180 nations. We recognize all creation as a manifestation and extension of God's gifts and goodness. We are peacemakers, recognizing the sacredness of all life, with special consideration for impoverished peoples and our sister, the Earth.

Like yourselves, the official delegates of COP5, we realize today the extreme urgency to stop the talk and walk the walk.

Just last year, during COP4 in Buenos Aires, we were astounded by 50 million left homeless by the flooding of the Yangtze River in China, 25 million more losing their homes from flooding in Bangladesh, 10,500 dead in Central America, and 4,000 dead in the Dominican Republic from hurricanes. The list of severe weather events has continued until today, including increased tornadoes, and melting glaciers and polar icecaps. In fact, if COP5 was scheduled to be held in the Cateret Islands in the South Pacific, we would all be underwater right now. The inhabitants of those Islands were recently evacuated to the mainland after centuries of successional generations because of climate change. Inhabitants of the Kiribati Islands are facing the same urgency. Other low-lying areas of the world are also threatened. There can be no question of the urgency.

It is disgraceful that the Kyoto Protocol is being delayed to the detriment of many, to benefit only a few. Some countries propose special compensation. It is unreasonable to compensate any party for eliminating pollution the Protocol is designed to prevent. It would seem only justifiable, if oil-rich nations compensated the technologies that they replaced many years ago, and those places under water today. OPEC, please stop holding up the process.

In regards to Emissions Trading, this Assembly should not allow itself to be driven by deceptive and oppressive self-serving interests. This destroys the spirit of negotiation by placing an overwhelming burden on the poor nations of the world. Thus it is irresponsible, backward, deceptive, and without equity. Emissions Trading does no more than allow parties to appear to be contributing, when in fact they are divesting themselves from individual accountability.

Even the term "developing countries", an elitism of the north, is degrading to the value, diversity, and attributes of local cultures and economies. Let the south not be so eager to adopt ways of the consumer-driven north, a

leading cause of global warming. Cultural diversity is as important as bio-diversity.

Emission inventories and compliance are important. However, to subject poorer nations to collect data on animal waste and biomass emissions is diversionary, unreasonable, and non-constructive. It is nearly an impossible task, serving virtually no constructive purpose, but to delay serious commitments to reduce fossil fuel dependency. It would be highly productive to promote vegetable intensive agriculture and diets, to reduce waste, preserve forests, protect bio-diversity, and prevent erosion, ultimately preventing climate change, while also improving public health.

In dealing with Carbon Sinks, forests are valued for their integrity, not as objects of compliance. Real reforestation takes place in the context of total ecological restoration, with special consideration for all creatures, animate and inanimate, especially endangered species, as integral members of the interdependent earth community. The regressive idea of replacing old growth forests with tree farms and other monocultures as carbon collectors, amounts to the same thing as using gasoline to douse a forest fire.

Included as part of Joint Implementation, we recommend that full debt cancellation and increases in non-military aid be applied to clean renewable energy development. And let us state clearly here, that nuclear power is an experiment whose time has come and gone. It should not be considered in any part of the Action Plan or Protocol.

Climate change can and must be controlled. Solutions have been defined, and can be easily understood and applied. Local and grassroots Capacity Building can make a significant difference simply by educating the public about the consequences, and providing incentives to turn electric and gasoline ignition switches off more often than not. Reward those that do, tax those that don't, while subsidizing and promoting only renewable alternatives. The public will respond en masse to your visionary leadership, campaigns, and example.

This Conference must provide special consideration for AOSIS, African, and other countries urgently dealing with erratic drought, storm events, and rising waters. Now is the obvious time to stand with courage, vision, and a spirit of self-sacrifice. We ask the Ministers present at COP5 to adopt a resolution that makes COP6 the final date for adopting the implementation rules in the Buenos Aires Action Plan, and assuring that the Kyoto Protocol enter into force by the 2002 Rio +10 goal.

Politics and protectionism must not stand in the way, and loopholes disguised as Mechanisms must not be allowed to divert accountability and responsibility. Let us not allow private interest to undermine the integrity of this Conference or our only home, Mother Earth. Life on this planet depends on making the right choice. We believe you know what that choice is and that you will negotiate accordingly. In the name of all children and their children to the seventh generation.

Thank You.

National Catholic Gathering for Jubilee Justice

Dan and Sarah Mulholland, SFO
Chairs, National Peace and Justice Commission
855 N Jefferson Street, Arlington VA 22205
703-524-6017; e-mail dannymai@aol.com

*The following is a reflection on this historic event
submitted by Pat Wilkin, SFO, member of the National
Peace & Justice Commission.*

"A National Catholic Gathering for Jubilee Justice" was held July 15-18, 1999 at UCLA. Under the wing of the NCCB Subcommittee on the Third Millennium, sixty-four Catholic organizations came together to bring into being this unique response to the Holy Father's call to prepare for the Great Jubilee Year 2000. Attendance was 3000 strong, primarily laity and religious, with a goodly number of bishops and priests among us. My husband and I considered ourselves privileged to be able to attend, and I want to bring its goodness back to you – because God should be glorified in His work! Catholic Social Teaching concretely bears the incredible challenge of bringing the Gospel to life, and our lives to the Gospel. "Their preferred apostolate is personal witness in the environment in which they live and service for building up the Kingdom of God within the situations of this world." (SFO Constitutions, Article 17(1))

*For me, it all
amounts to a
formidable
challenge to live
what I have
professed.*

The gathering focused on justice needs and efforts, and gave witness to much goodness. The very experience of our races together and our efforts to walk in solidarity was a cause for jubilation. The courage and service of people like Maria Julia Hernandez, head of the Human Rights Office of the Archdiocese of San Salvador, reminded me

that the Holy Spirit in us is not a spirit of cowardice or of inaction. Having worked under Archbishop Romero, she was chosen to lead the Human Rights Office after his murder, and continues in that role. A lawyer by profession, she spoke about her first week on the job, when all she did was reclaim bodies. By God's grace, she remains to this day not only alive, but a persistent voice for justice and accountability. Listening to her, I could only recall that "Secular Franciscans are called to make their own contribution, inspired by the person and message of Francis of Assisi, towards a civilization in which the dignity of the human person, shared responsibility, and love may be living realities." (SFO Constitutions, Article 18(1))

A tremendous witness of forgiveness and healing came through Bud Welch, whose daughter, Julie, was killed in the Oklahoma City bombing. He has confronted his own hatred and anger, met with the father of Timothy McVeigh, that they may heal together, and is now a leader in the movement to end capital punishment in this country. His self-conquering courage and initiative resembled Saint Francis in his encounter with the wolf. I

hear "Secular Franciscans should 'be in the forefront...'. They should collaborate as much as possible for the passage of just laws and ordinances.... The renunciation of the use of violence, characteristic of the followers of Francis, does not mean the renunciation of action...." (SFO Constitutions, Article 22(1),(3))

Witnesses to Christ wove through the range of life issues: migrants; refugees; globalization; sweatshops; crisis pregnancies; physician-assisted suicide; organizing and advocacy; bringing a Catholic presence to home, school, community, and nation, etc. God interwove additional realities as well. On the way to and from each day's sessions, Bill and I had to travel through Beverly Hills. We passed incredible gardens and gates, with no houses in sight, and at the end of most driveways were two signs: 1) "Private Drive"; and 2) "Armed Response". Having listened to concerns voiced at our SFO All Commissions Conference at Saint Bonaventure University, and again at the Jubilee Justice Gathering, I grieved over the guns now located at the southern border of our own country. Troubled by such disparity, most dearly I carried home the message of *The Church in America*, the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation which Pope John Paul II personally traveled to Guadalupe to give to us in January. His call is a vision, a challenge to all Americans to see ourselves as, and to come to be, one people, one America – North, South, and Central – in conversion, in communion, and in solidarity. He quietly, strongly confronts privilege and prejudice with the call to walk with each other in Jesus' name. For me, it all amounts to a formidable challenge to live what I have professed.



Better a patient man
than a warrior,
a man who controls
his temper than
the one who
takes a city.

Proverbs 16:32

A Note from the Editors

May the Lord give you His Peace!

It has now been one year that we have been serving you as editors of your national newsletter. This has been a great joy for us, and we are grateful for the opportunity to continue in this capacity. We would like to take this opportunity to call a few items to your attention:

- Please be sure that we receive your regional newsletter.
- Please ask your newsletter editors to identify your region and your geographical location somewhere on the front page of your newsletter. Sometimes we receive news, but we do not know where it is from, because it is identified only with the name of the local fraternity.
- Please send us articles on events in your region.
- When sending articles of personal interest, please be sure to report on the SFO aspect. For example, why is the event important to you as an SFO, or what was your contribution as an SFO to the event?
- Please send us ideas for articles, or suggestions for interviews. If you have an idea, but are not "a writer", send us the basics, and then call us so that we can ask you further questions.
- We need your input, suggestions, and ideas. Our vision is for TAU-USA to be a family newsletter, a clearing house for ideas and information. Regional and local fraternities, and individual Secular Franciscans are doing great works – things of benefit and potential benefit to the Order, the Church, and the world. Please help us to let your brothers and sisters know.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours in Saint Francis,
the Outhwaites



**I call upon the Eternal Father to guide
our feet in the way of that peace
which surpasses all understanding.**

**This is the peace proclaimed and given
to us by our Lord Jesus Christ and
preached again and again
by our father Francis.**

**At the beginning and end of every
sermon he announced peace;
in every greeting he wished for peace;
in every contemplation he sighed for
ecstatic peace.**

Saint Bonaventure, *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*

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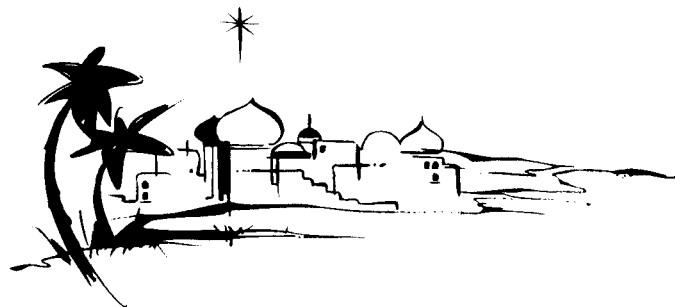
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**In labyrinth learning seek magi the light
While shepherds are keeping their flocks in the night.
And both find the manger where little Love lies,
But sooner the shepherds! Follow the wise.**

**Sing glory! hosanna! the ageless is young,
A child. And by children His praises are sung.
For only the child-heart that bows very low
Sees wisdom disguised in swaddling clothes.**

from *The Story is Old*
by Mother Mary Francis, Poor Clare



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Catch Me A Rainbow Too! Ideal for Initial and Ongoing Formation! NOW HERE!

Bach, Lester, OFM Cap. (1999). \$16.00 per copy, plus \$4.50 P&H; P&H is \$5.50 for 2, \$7.00 for 3. 10 or more copies is \$12.80 per copy, plus P&H.

Gospel Living Every Day of Our Lives: A Formation Guide To The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order. Baker, Teresa V., SFO. (1994). 5 1/2" x 8 1/2", 131 pages. \$10.00 per copy, plus \$4.50 P&H; P&H is \$5.50 for 2, \$7.00 for 3; 10 or more copies is \$8.00 per copy plus P&H.

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Handbook For Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership. (1998). 8 1/2" X 11", 3 hole drilled, 137 pages plus Formation Resource List as a 58 page appendix. \$22.50 per copy, plus \$4.50 P&H; P&H is \$5.50 for 2, \$7.00 for 3; 10 or more copies is \$18.00 per copy, plus P&H.

The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order. (1997). 5" x 3" red presentation edition, 40 pages. 10 books for only \$18.40 (includes P&H).

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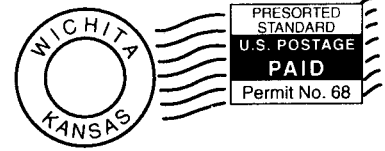
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