

THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER



Newsletter

Issue Number 1

Fall, 1993

**NAFRA in  
Albuquerque**

*by Dorothy Palzinski, SFO*

Sunshine, clear blue skies, smiles and franciscan hugs greeted all as we arrived in Albuquerque, New Mexico, for the National Minister's meeting. Gathered together were 73 Franciscans; 49 SFOs and 24 Friars (OFM, OFM Cap., OFM Conv., and TORs). All worked together long and hard on a very full schedule. Points of business included:  
-Commission Reports:  
Ron Pihokker-Formation  
Carol Gentile-Family  
Allen Jordan - Work  
Charles Spencer-Ecology  
Ronald Micheli - Peace & Justice.

All were concerned if material they develop and send is reaching fraternity commission people. They urge that this material be distributed:

-Budget was presented and approved.  
-Elections were held for two Executive Council positions (1 year terms) Geraldine Rome was elected Vice Minister; Bill Wicks, Secretary. Elections for the entire National Executive Council will be in 1994. - Seven Regions were approved for Full Regional status: Blessed Junipero Serra (Ca., Nev., Ut.), St. Francis (Central Ca.), St. Thomas More (Ariz.), Divine Mercy (Mich., part of Ohio), St. Joan of Arc (E.Tex., La., Miss., S.Ala.), St. Margaret of Cortona (Wash. D.C., Va., Pa., Md.), Eastern Rite Region.  
Nine Regions were given Emerging Region Status.

-National Statutes were discussed, altered and approved. They will be sent to Rome for approval.

Fr. Gerald Arbuckel, SM, presented an ongoing formation program, "Refounding." He stressed that "Refounding is deliberate, organized, conscious effort by members of society to construct a more satisfying culture out of a state of chaos. In this process three categories of people can be distinguished; pathfinders, problem solvers  
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- +Fall NAFRA Council Meeting--and much more

## Close Encounter of a Third Kind

*by Alan Ouimet, SFO, Founder & Director, Franciscan Family Apostolate*

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The day I first set foot in India I immediately wanted to turn around and go home. The twenty-two hour flight had built up a lot of internal pressures. It had been sixteen years since I founded the Franciscan Family Apostolate, an apostolate which seeks to link American Secular Franciscans in a real way with the destitute of India, many of them Franciscans themselves. Now after so many years I would meet all the beneficiaries whom we in the SFO had been helping for so long. The trinity of persons in me were causing great interior unrest--Alan, the devoted husband and father; Alan, the Special Agent of the FBI; and Alan, the professed Secular Franciscan.

As I lifted off at JFK in New York, I wondered and mildly wept over the inner drama of leaving my wife and children for a place over 22 hours of flying time away. Would I get sick from some strange disease in an equally strange land? Would the poverty there make me one of those strange persons who visit the third world and can never adjust to the affluence of America causing misery in the home? The FBI Agent in me was fearful of being recognized. I was traveling in Kerala, the only state whose government was run by the Communist Party of India and who were constantly doing battle with the Catholic Church. The town to which I was traveling is called the "little Moscow of India." Their emblems, hammers and sickles, were all over the place even in mosaics on the street. What would they do if they found an FBI Agent walking among them? Would I be arrested and thrown in jail? Would they make an international incident out of it? What kind of father would put his life and career in harm's way in pursuit of some quixotic dream or notion about the poor? Aren't there enough poor in America? Lastly, Alan, the Secular Franciscan, chided me for being an FBI Agent in the first place! How could I

carry a gun and consider myself Franciscan? Should I leave the FBI and loose security, pension and all as recommended by one friar? Was the Apostolate a trade-off born of my inability to answer the real questions and make real changes in my life as an American Franciscan?

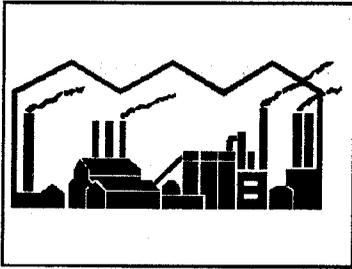
All these questions were to drop by the wayside during the following weeks as I encountered the poor families whom we were assisting. As did Francis, I was to find in the poor a graciousness that is hard to find elsewhere. Their life being one of total dependence on God makes for a simplicity that is disarming. I could imagine Francis walking among them, healing their wounds and taking from them a lesson of what it means to live a life of hope amidst great want. In these poor people, Francis would find lives totally dependent on God's goodness--no dependency on government for welfare programs, or insurance companies to care for medical or other catastrophic needs. He would find no pensions or social security to carry them into old age. Unlike poverty in the United States he would find no safety nets in government programs--only the Church which is very poor itself, and a few organizations like the Franciscan Family Apostolate on which the Church depends for major assistance.

On this trip, my trinity of persons was to well up into one big crescendo of joy! My fellow Franciscans in American who cared so long for the poor through this beautiful Apostolate had made me the primary recipient of so much gratitude. The Bishop had gathered many of the 1000 sponsored families to greet me at the cathedral on my arrival from the airport. As we turned into the driveway I felt a great big gulp form in my throat. All those poor people in white cotton! As I walked through them, they smiled and touched me as I did them--a close encounter of a third kind!!! I could feel God coming to me through them saying, "Don't worry about all those questions, Alan. You are loved for what you are--I love you."

In the ensuing weeks I was astounded as to what such a small amount sent every month could do to help a family in India. Secular Franciscans had done so much to help these families get on their feet in so many, many ways. Visiting the huts I could see the family photos of SFO sponsors standing next to the picture of Jesus. One poor woman told me she prays at night by "imaging" her sponsor's picture up to heaven. What more could Franciscans have in their favor than the prayer of the poor?

This is my 25th year as a professed Secular Franciscan. Questions still stir my soul. That is the reason for our Rule--to help us live the examined life. Now retired from the FBI, I spend all my time working to find Secular Franciscans who want to help the poor through the Franciscan Family Apostolate. Yes, I and my family are safe and secure. Yet in the background is always the poor, not pointing the finger of accusation at my affluence but as gracious witnesses to a much simpler life and hopeful participants in my good fortune. "Leave the care of your body in God's hands. If your faith in him is strong, he will inspire someone to provide for you, and you will never lack what you need," admonishes Blessed Baptista Varani, a 16th century Poor Clare. As American Secular Franciscans we are the inspired providers. The cost is little, the reward is great.

(to FFA p. 5)



## NAFTA: An Overview

*Allen Jordan, SFO  
Chair, National  
Work Commission*

The North American Free Trade Agreement has the intense support of USA\*NAFTA, a group composed of most of the major corporations and big businesses of this country. Furthermore, the Mexican government is financing a major lobbying campaign to influence NAFTA's passage through the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate. NAFTA has been the secret project developed to stimulate the economy by Republican and Democratic administrations.

Why have so many millions of dollars been spent by business, the Mexican government and our government to push NAFTA into being? We do not have the total scope to make a definitive statement at this time, but if that effort and money were spent in any one of the major depressed

urban areas (Los Angeles, Chicago or New York) we would be able to virtually eliminate any signs of urban blight or city depression as evidenced by high unemployment.

There is a mounting coalition of opposition to the passage of the NAFTA bill (in its present form) and the lines are being drawn for confrontation. An improved economy and new jobs are cited as reasons for its passage but the obvious wage imbalances, lax ecological laws, poor safety regulations and the potential for increased weapon and drug trafficking seem to be insufficient trade-offs without beneficial legislation and proper regulatory enforcement.

A major oppositional group and a good source of information is CTC (Citizens Trade Campaign). CTC is mounting a major lobbying campaign to have our Senators take a closer look at the effects produced by the enactment of NAFTA and they are seeking public support of concerned citizens to contact their representatives. Please read and review available data

and news releases on this NAFTA bill. Write your Senator of your concern for the protection of your rights and those of your children.

For more information:

Citizens Trade Campaign  
600 Maryland Ave., SW,  
#202W  
Washington, D.C. 20024  
1-202/554-1102

Questions for discussion:

- How will the free road access and border traffic affect the safety of those living in border states?
- How can the work commission influence the outcome of the NAFTA vote and improve working conditions for the working class?
- How will Mexican workers making less per day afford to purchase U.S. products manufactured by U. S. workers making more per hour?
- What happens to smaller businesses unable to manufacture in Mexico at the lower cost for sale in the competitive U.S. market?

**If 20,000 Secular Franciscans who use 5 grocery bags a week, reused their bags each week until they were unusable (about 25 trips to the grocery), 50,000 bags would be saved. That is a lot of trees or a large quantity of plastic. Reuse-Reduce-Recycle! It's very Franciscan!**

VII. POST-ELECTION PROCEDURES While the Constitutions and canons are silent on these matters, we offer the present practice of NAFRA as a serendipitous option:

A. The Presider calls for a motion to destroy the ballots. Upon its passing, the ballots are destroyed.

B. Election minutes with full results are prepared by the Secretary, signed by Presider, Secretary and both scrutineers, then filed within the archives of the electing body and of its next higher fraternity.

*The above distillation is an attempt to be technically correct. We Franciscans, however, are known for our courtesy and our charity. No matter how hard we may try to conform in all ways to the program, there are occasions when very small deviations may creep in despite our best efforts. When such problems arise, give us a call at National, and we will do everything we can to help you over the hump while ensuring that the vital ingredients to keep your actions legal are preserved. Here's to congenial elections!*

(FFA cont. from p. 3)  
Francis gave us a fragrance of it in his last testament in his own words, "When I was in sin, the sight of lepers nauseated me beyond measure; but then God himself led me into their company, and I had pity on them. When I had once become acquainted with them, what had previously nauseated me became a source of spiritual and physical consolation for me. After that I did not wait long before leaving the world." May I invite you to this little portion of the world? Wouldn't it be great to meet Francis after you die and have him point to a photo of you next to Jesus in a poor family's hut?

*(Alan, a member of St. Pius X Fraternity in Middletown, Ct., is founder/director of Franciscan Family Apostolate. If you wish to sponsor a family or want more information on the Apostolate, contact Alan at 303 Church Street, Guilford, Ct. 06437; telephone #203/458-8172.)*

## Readers Needed!

*Franciscans Network* needs volunteer readers to assist with Mustard Seed and Mustard Seed Update.

Published bimonthly on an alternating basis, these publications endeavor to inform all Franciscans of issues and activities pertinent to their mission.

Readers receive material to read, mark and return items of interest to Franciscans Network. Interested?

Contact: Mary Glynn Auer  
*Franciscans Network*  
1615 Vine Street  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45210  
513/721-4700 ext. 3104  
FAX 513/421-9672

## Videotapes Available

Fr. Benet Fonck's presentation on SFO General Constitutions are available for fraternity use. Two, 2-hour videos are intended to enable Secular Franciscans to more fully live the Rule as we follow the Gospel.

The tapes are divided into 8 segments, 10-40 minutes each. Tapes and a paper copy of the text may be purchased by sending check for \$33, shipping included, name & address to:

Secular Franciscan Order  
1615 Vine Street  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45210

## Miracles Do Happen

### *The Power of Prayer*

As I travel around the country, it has been especially heart-warming to hear and feel the concern hundreds of you have had for the health of my daughter, Barbara. As I cannot communicate with each one of you individually, I thought I would take some space in this issue of the newsletter to let everyone know her status and, at the same time, to thank you all for your prayers, sacrifices and concern.

In August, 1992, during the closing days of the Quinquennial Congress, Karol, my wife, and I left the Congress early to be with Barbara for her third open heart surgery. A mechanical mitral valve was inserted into her heart to replace her defective natural valve.

Today, Barbara is a very active, energetic

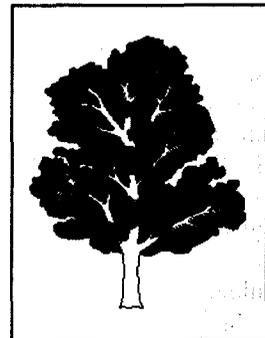
21-year old who will be graduating from Concordia College in Moorhead, Mn., in May of next year. In her own words, "I have a strong interest in the environment and in environmental politics. This summer I worked as a counselor and nature specialist at a camp for adults who have developmental disabilities, physical challenges, and behavioral challenges. It was hard work (22 hours a day, five days a week), but I absolutely loved it!!! I hope to pursue a career in environmental education for adults and children who have developmental and physical disabilities. I plan to fit some environmental politics into my career as well.

"Some things in my life have not changed. I still take on too much (according to most people except for me) and I am still a rebellious patient

(though healthy) Especially from all of the hard work at camp I notice that I can do more physically now than ever before. What a wonderful change."

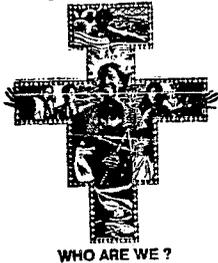
There is no way our family can thank you, my brothers and sisters, for all your support during the times of crisis. We know that it was the prayers, sacrifices, and the love of those who knew of the situation that caused a miracle to happen in our lives. Thanks and God bless all of you.

*Richard Morton*



## Franciscans Network

### FRANCISCANS NETWORK



*Franciscans Network* was founded on the Feast of Saint Francis, October 4, 1989. Readers may be familiar with its networking publications, Mustard Seed and Mustard Seed Update. The goal of FN is to educate, inform, connect and encourage Franciscan men and women to live the Gospel. Its mission is stated:

**We are a group of North American Franciscan men and women, individuals and organizations. We are dedicated to providing opportunities for all Franciscans to meet, to communicate, to collaborate in furthering Franciscan values in North America.**

The Board of Trustees of FN is composed of

Franciscans from various Franciscan communities throughout North America. Secular Franciscans currently serving on the Board include Richard Morton, National Minister; Alan Hartman, President of the Board of Trustees; and Patti Normile, editor of NAFRA Newsletter. Newly elected Trustees are Secular Franciscans Georgeann Campbell and Mary Ann Hillard.

Franciscans Network hosted the Franciscan Symposium in Denver in 1992, gathering several hundred Franciscans from this continent to discuss issues of mutual interest and to share their experience of Christ as North Americans. The next gathering, the first North American Franciscan Chapter of Mats for all Franciscans, is planned for for Denver in August, 1996.

Fraternities as well as individuals are invited to join Franciscans Network. (No apostrophe--network is a action verb.) Whether you are a fraternity, soup kitchen worker, writer, grandmother, teacher, administrator, family, spiritual director, nurse or environmentalist, **you are invited to join**

**Franciscans Network.** By joining you can enable FN to prepare for the First North American Franciscan Chapter of Mats, and to help develop our Franciscan family "Notice Board," Mustard Seed Update.

Levels of membership are:

\$5000	Benefactor
\$3000	Patron
\$1000	Sponsor
\$ 500	Donor
\$ 250	Supporter
\$ 100	Contributor
\$ 50	Friend
<u>\$ 25</u>	<u>Subscriber Plus</u>
\$ 12	Mustard Seed + Update Subscription

Only - 3 issues each  
(\$15 in Canada; \$17,  
overseas)

(Make checks payable to:  
Franciscans Network.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone( ) \_\_\_\_\_

FAX( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Province/Region \_\_\_\_\_

Fraternity \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Level \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to:

Franciscans Network  
1615 Vine Street  
Cincinnati, OH. 45210

## EVANGELIZATION 2000

The special ministry of the laity is in helping to solve the social problems of society. Both Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul II have told us this. We hear a lot about the necessity for change from the leaders of our government today but unless this change reflects the mind of Christ as revealed in the stories in the Gospel, it is based on a false premise and inspired by wrong spirit, not the Holy Spirit of God. Our mission, as People of God, is to make sure this change brought about in society reflects the mind of Christ. To accomplish our our mission we need to rouse ourselves to action. We do this in many ways but this article will concentrate on our Bishops' Public Policy Agenda as researched by the U.S. Catholic Conference headquartered in Washington, D.C.

The following are some current issues of interest. We suggest that you look at these issues in light of the Gospel and write your own U.S. Senators and Congressional Representatives giving your views.

- **The Hyde Amendment**, passed by the House, goes to the Senate and then to a joint Senate/House Committee for reconciliation. A vote is expected in September. A very close vote is anticipated. The Hyde Amendment prohibits the use of public money to fund elective abortions and the outcome of this vote may determined whether national health care reform is burdened by the controversial inclusion of abortion coverage.
- **The Childhood Immunization Initiative** will provide free vaccine to children who are uninsured or whose health insurance does not cover vaccine. The Bumpers Amendment, adopted by the Senate, penalizes AFDC recipients whose children are not fully immunized; does not expand the number of children immunized; nor does it help families who are not eligible for Medicaid afford the high cost of vaccines.
- **The Family Preservation and Support Provisions** will provide a significant increase in resources to public and private agencies to strengthen families and prevent child abuse for abused and neglected children.
- **The Workplace Fairness Act** renamed **The Caesar Chavez Workplace Fairness Act (Senate Bill 55)** protects a basic right of workers to go out on strike. This bill has passed the House and is now in the Senate. For over 100 years the social teaching of the Church has recognized and urged that the rights of workers to organize, to bargain collectively for just wages and working conditions and to strike to secure these rights be respected as measures of human dignity. The practice of hiring replacement workers nullifies the right to strike. Let you elected representatives know where you

priorities of the Catholic Bishops Conference Position are: 1) **Universal Access and Priority Concern for the Poor.** The Bishops do not support a two-tiered system but believe health care for the unserved and the underserved should be affordable, accessible and of good quality, comparable to care for those with greater resources. 2) **Respect for Human Life and Human Dignity:** Every human being has a right to health care services. Health care should not be burdened with abortion coverage. Bishops support the Hyde Amendment which prohibits the use of federal funds for abortions except for rape, incest or life of mother. To include abortion coverage violates the consciences of millions of Americans and endangers the passage of the Health Care Reform Bill. 3) **Pursuing the Common Good and Preserving Pluralism:** A reformed system must encourage the creative and renewed involvement of both the public and private sectors, including voluntary, religious and non-profit providers of care. It must also respect the religious and ethical values of both individuals and institutions involved in the health care system. 4) **Restraining Costs:** The Bishops insist that any acceptable plan must include effective mechanisms to restrain rising health care costs. By bringing health care cost inflation down we could cut the federal deficit, improve economic competitiveness, and help stem the decline of living standards for many working families.

**CALL OR WRITE YOUR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS STATING YOUR VIEWS.** Write as private citizens rather than Secular Franciscans. This appears to be the more effective way. Comprehensive Health Care Reform is not a sure thing with many uncertainties on the inclusion of the above concerns.

- U. S. Funding for UN Peacekeeping Forces - Bishops support full payment of U.S. share of U. N. peacekeeping cost for FY 1994.
- There are many other issues in which you may be interested. Let members of Congress know your thoughts. Your ideas are important.
- **PLEASE PHOTOCOPY THESE ISSUES AND DISTRIBUTE TO YOUR FRATERNITY MEMBERS.**

Mary C. Lahiff, SFO

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## **Truly Franciscan Election Process-- Loving and Technically Correct**

*by Marguerite Stein, SFO  
Canonist*

Continuing questions arise concerning the conduct of elections, due primarily, it seems, to the fact that the provisions of our Constitutions and Statutes and of the Code of Canon Law are not readily available at local fraternity level.

The 1989 General Constitutions for the Secular Franciscan Order, approved and promulgated by the Holy See, contain Articles 76-80 setting forth procedures for elections at the various levels of the Order. Our International Presidency has declared these articles to be effective immediately.

The 1989 General Constitutions specifically provide also that our elections are to take place according to the norms of the law of the Church, referring to the 1983 Code of Canon Law, Canons 164-179. This material, made a part of our procedures by the wording in our new Constitutions, is published along with the new sections

from the Constitutions, for your guidance.

We are publishing these important sections elsewhere in this issue, and call your attention to the fact that we may continue to use existing statutes or governance guidelines except where they contradict the General Constitutions and the canon law of the Church.

Your National Officers are presently working on new Statutes for NAFRA to conform to the new Constitutions and the proposed International Statutes.

Studying all of the provisions which are now in effect and interpreting them to give the words their proper meaning in context, taking into account the mind of the Holy See and the general principles of law and equity practiced within the Roman Curia, the best practical applications seems to be:

**I. NOMINATIONS** The new material contains nothing on this subject. We may continue whatever process has been found serviceable in the past.

**A. By Committee**  
At NAFRA, the practice is that the Minister, with Council approval, appoints a

nominations committee, which, acting independently of the Council, invites the electoral body to submit nominations for the various offices. This appointment is usually done 3-4 months before a scheduled election.

The Committee then verifies that each nominee has the necessary qualifications to hold the office, has reviewed the duties of the office, and is willing to serve if elected. A resume is obtained from each nominee and circulated to the electoral body prior to the election.

**B. From the Floor.**  
The Presiding Officer may at his discretion permit nominations from the floor; candidates may be proposed only if they are found to be eligible, to have knowledge of the duties of the office, and have consented to serve. These determinations are for the Presiding Officer to make at the time of nomination.

### **II. PREPARATIONS**

**A. Notifications.** The Minister shall timely notify the Minister of the immediately higher level of the Order (Province, or IF ESTABLISHED, Region) of the forthcoming election so that he or his delegate may

arrange to attend and preside.

The Minister shall timely notify the Spiritual Assistant of the immediately higher level also, so that he or his delegate may arrange to attend and witness to the communion of the SFO with the First Order and the TOR.

B. Appointments. Prior to the elections, a Secretary and at least two scrutineers from among the electing body shall be appointed in any manner acceptable to the group. The scrutineers shall distribute, collect and count the votes under the direction of the Presider. A notary shall be appointed who shall sign a record of the proceedings of the election which shall be preserved in the archives of the electing body.

C. Preparation of Ballots. Ballots shall be prepared to ensure that the vote for each office shall be secret, certain, absolute and determinate. The ballot may specify several offices on one page only if the body has determined not to nominate unsuccessful candidates for subsequent offices.

NAFRA practice has been:  
1. All candidates are listed alphabetically.

2. Two or 3 lines are left at the bottom of each ballot to allow for nominations from the floor.

3. Three sets of ballots are prepared for each vote, labeled according to office and votation, as Minister, ballot #1 etc.

4. Tally sheets are prepared for use by the Presider, Secretary and scrutineers in counting votes, and should contain the names as listed on the ballots, space for any nominations from the floor, and space to list votes cast.

III. CONVOCATION The Minister shall, at least one month in advance of the election, convoke the members of the electing body by summoning them to a specific place, date and time. Information concerning the persons nominated shall be included in this summons.

IV. ELIGIBILITY TO VOTE The Presider over an election determines the identity of those eligible to vote.

A. Local Fraternity elections. Perpetually professed of the Fraternity have active voice (right to vote) and passive voice (right to be elected). The temporarily professed and Spiritual Assistant have

active voice.

B. Elections at Regional and Province Level. Active voice is held by members of the outgoing Council, representative of the immediately lower level, and representatives of Spiritual Assistants. Passive voice is held by perpetually professed Secular Franciscans of the area.

Existing statutes and guidelines may still be used so long as they do not conflict with the above two provisions, as long as we take care to secure the broadest elective base.

#### V. ELECTION PROCEDURE

A. At the date and time set for the election, the Minister of the electing body shall yield the chair to the Minister of the next higher body or his delegate, who

**Newsletter Deadlines**  
Deadlines and publication times for upcoming newsletters will be:  
January 15 - Winter - late February  
April 15 - Spring - late May  
July 15 - Summer - late August  
October 15 - Fall - late November  
Watch newsletter for possible changes in these dates.

shall preside over the elections.

B. The Presider shall then and there determine the identity of those eligible to vote, who shall be segregated in some practical way and shall be counted.

C. The Presider may at his or her option provide time for introduction of the various candidates for office, or for each candidate to address the assembly.

D. In the sole discretion of the Presider, the vote may be taken and completed as to each office before proceeding to the next; in this way, persons not elected to the first office voted upon may be nominated from the floor for remaining offices should the body so desire.

E. Ballots shall be counted before distributions to conform to the number of eligible voters present, and shall be distributed only to the electors.

F. All ballots must be returned, whether marked or not, and must be counted after the vote. If the ballots returned do not add up to the same number as the ballots distributed, the ballots are not read; they are discarded, and the vote must be taken again.

#### G. NUMBER OF VOTES REQUIRED TO ELECT.

1. For election of Minister and Vice-Minister, an absolute majority vote is required. After two ballots without result, only the two candidates with the highest number of votes shall remain. If the vote remains tied thereafter, the oldest by profession shall be considered elected.

2. For councillors, after a first ballot without an absolute majority, it suffices on the second ballot that there be a relative majority only for election of the candidate.

#### H. TALLYING THE VOTE.

1. A  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote is  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the number of electors. Note: If 100 electors participate in the election, a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote is 67. **Regardless of whether the remaining ballots are marked "No" or are blank or specify a write-in, unauthorized candidate, so long as they do not say "yes" they cannot add to the majority of "Yes" vote. You take the number of ballots distributed, divide by 3 and multiply by 2 to determine whether you have a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote.**

2. An absolute majority is 50% of electors plus one.

NOTE: If 100 electors participate in the election, an absolute majority vote is 51. Regardless of whether the remaining ballots are marked "No" or are blank or specify a write-in, unauthorized candidate, so long as they do not say "Yes" they cannot add to the majority "Yes" vote. To determine a successful candidacy, you take the number of ballots distributed, divide by 2 and add one for an absolute majority.

3. A relative majority is merely the highest number of votes cast, even though not amounting to an absolute majority.

#### VI. ANNOUNCEMENT AND CONFIRMATION OF RESULT

A. When it is determined to the satisfaction of the scrutineers that a candidate has been elected, the Secretary announces the result of the elections.

B. The Presider then confirms in writing that, first, the election was carried out properly, and second, that each successful candidate has accepted the office.

C. The Presider then confirms the election according to the Ritual (Chapter II) (next page)

(Elections-continued )

APPENDIX A - Title IV

Election to ... Offices Elections

Art. 76

1. The elections at the various levels will take place according to the norms of the law of the Church<sup>1</sup> and of the Constitutions.

The convocation should be carried out at least one month in advance, indicating the place, the day and the time of the election.

2. The elective Assembly, or Chapter, will be presided by the Minister of the Council of the immediately higher level, or by his or her delegate, who confirms the election.

In the local and regional Fraternities, the President or the delegate to preside is not to be a member of the Fraternity in which the elections take place.

The Spiritual Assistant of the immediately higher level or his delegate is to be present as a witness of the communion with the First Order and the TOR.

A representative of the Union of the Ministers General of the First Order and the TOR presides at and confirms the elections of the International Presidency.

3. The President of the Chapter and the Assistant of the higher level do not have the right to vote.

4. For every elective assembly a Secretary and two scrutineers are to be designated.<sup>2</sup>

Art.77

1. In the local Fraternity the perpetually professed of the same Fraternity have active and passive voice. The temporarily professed and the Spiritual Assistant have only

active voice.<sup>3</sup>

2. At the other levels, the following have active voice: the members of the outgoing Council, the representatives of the immediately lowerlevel, of the Franciscan Youth, if professed, and of the Spiritual Assistants. It is the competence of the particular Statutes to establish more concrete norms for the application of the preceding norm, taking care to assure the broadest elective base. The perpetually professed Secular Franciscans of the corresponding area have passive voice.

Art. 78

1. An absolute majority of the votes of those present, cast in secret, is required for the election of the Minister. After two inconclusive ballots, the voting continues between the two candidates who have obtained the largest number of votes or, in case there are more than two, between the two candidates who are oldest by profession. If there is still a tie after the third ballot, the older by profession will be considered elected.

2. The election of the Vice-Minister proceeds in the same manner.

3. For the election of the Councillors, after the first ballot without an absolute majority, a relative majority of the votes of those present, cast in secret, is sufficient, unless the particular Statutes require a greater majority.

4. The Secretary announces the results of the elections; the President confirms the election according to the Ritual.<sup>4</sup>

Art. 79

1. The Ministers may be elected for two consecutive terms of three years each. When exceptional

circumstances require it, for a third and final successive election to the office of Minister, a majority of two-thirds of the votes of those present, which must be obtained on the first ballot, will be necessary, as well as the confirmation by the President of the elective Assembly.

2. The same norms are valid for the election of the Minister General of the SFO, whose term is six years.<sup>5</sup>

3. The Councillors may be elected for additional successive terms of three years. Beginning with the third successive election, a majority of two-thirds of the votes of those present will be necessary.

This should be carried out in such a way that after two terms of three years, at least one third of the Council is replaced.

4. The same norms are valid for the election of the Councillors of the Presidency of the International Council SFO, whose term is six years.

5. The Council of the higher level has the right and duty to invalidate the elections and call them anew in all cases of inobservance of the prescribed norms.

Art.80 The particular Statutes may include further directives concerning elections, as long as they are not contrary to the Constitutions.

*General Constitutions for the Secular Franciscan Order, 1989*

[Additional references: Code of Canon Law(1983) Article 3, Election, Canons 164-179, 119 & 149.]



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<sup>1</sup> See Code of Canon Law (1983), canons 164ff.

<sup>2</sup> See Code, canon 173.

<sup>3</sup> Active voice is the right to vote (vox active); Passive voice is the right to be voted upon (vox passiva), that is, the eligibility to be elected.

<sup>4</sup> See Ritual SFO, Part II, Chap.II.

<sup>5</sup>

(NAFRA from page 1) and implementers." The excellent and timely presentation was a reminder that ongoing formation is a necessary part of every SFO fraternity meeting.

The closing prayer service, "Ceremony of Transition," reminded all that new life would follow the death of Provinces as Regions arise and bloom. Prayers, readings and hymns reflected on the seed from the dead plant being planted in new rich soil followed by the joy of new life as Friars and SFOs grow and develop as a true Franciscan family.

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Richard Morton  
3191 71st Street East  
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What would you enjoy reading about in the NAFRA Newsletter? Stories of activities of SFOs that reflect their Franciscan lifestyles? Suggestions for effective meetings? Notices of

activities around the country? If you have an idea for an article, let us know. You, the readers, are our link with the fraternity around the country. Tell us your interests. The newsletter is yours!

## SFO National Assistants Choose New Leaders

*Benet Fonck, OFM*

The Conference of National Spiritual Assistants (CNSA) of the Secular Franciscan Order selected Fr. Camillus MacRory OFM Cap as president and Fr. Adalbert Wolski TOR, secretary at its June meeting in Washington, DC. Fr. Matthew Gaskin OFM of Holy Name Province was named to replace Fr. Larry Landini OFM as national spiritual assistant for the OFM Obedience.

The selection process for president and secretary implements CNSA's newly approved internal guidelines. The guidelines also outline:

- how national assistants are chosen by the respective conferences of friar superiors;
- what they are expected to accomplish in serving the SFO National Fraternity;
- how to bolster friars' work with Secular Franciscans;
- establish who can be part of the national assistants' conference.

The CNSA also approved a new job description for the provincial spiritual assistant which highlights his role as delegate of his own provincial minister for the formation of friars in their service to the SFO and for the official care of fraternities bonded to the province by establishing new fraternities and appointing assistants.

The national assistants worked out a standardized document for the establishment of local fraternities to be used by all entities in the United States and developed new guidelines and questionnaires for pastoral visits of regional and provincial fraternities.

In other action, the conference:

- drafted a letter to the Executive Council of the National Fraternity (NAFRA) offering guidance on remuneration for assistance rendered by the friars;
- set a tentative agenda for the gathering of provincial assistants in Albuquerque in October in conjunction with the NAFRA meeting to include a study of the difference between regional and provincial assistance, and a plan for future meetings of assistants;
- set goal to collaborate with NAFRA on clarifying the role of the friar witness at elections and on creating a document for the formal establishment of a regional fraternity.

## Where, Oh Where Has Your Newsletter Been?

If you have wondered where your NAFRA newsletter has been, if you have stayed awake at night with concern that your subscription had expired, fear not. An editorial change takes time--especially when the new editor has to learn a new computer program and gather information. Many thanks to Richard Morton for publishing the interim newsletter and for assisting with this one. All subscribers will receive the correct number of issues.

What would you enjoy reading about in the NAFRA Newsletter? Stories of activities of SFOs that reflect their Franciscan lifestyles? Suggestions for effective meetings? Notices of activities around the country? If you have an idea for an article, let us know. You, the readers, are our link with the fraternity around the country. Tell us your needs and interests. The Newsletter is yours!

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### From the editor:

Always be cautious about whom you sit next to at Franciscan meetings! In August, 1992, at the Quinquennial Congress, I sat next to a delightful woman. She was taking photos and taping the meetings. Conversation revealed that she was Elizabeth Ryder, editor of the NAFRA Newsletter. After the Congress, we became "penpals" you might say. I requested photos for a St. Anthony Messenger article on Secular Franciscans because none of mine turned out. Neither did hers but she graciously offered me pictures of her kittens! We laughed about what was in the air at the Congress that kept only those photos from developing.. We both had letters to one another in the mail when Elizabeth went to meet the Lord.

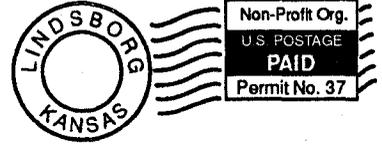
When Richard Morton asked for a volunteer to edit the Newsletter, it was as if Elizabeth were there, saying, "You could do that!" So I volunteered. If she were only here to help me with my computer illiteracy, I would be so grateful. Things vanish from my screen into the unknown world of computer heaven, never to be found again. Type styles change when I don't tell them to. And finally the whole program decides to crunch. That is why this newsletter may have that old-fashioned "patchwork" appearance. It became a cut and piece project. But I am learning---about computers and patience.

The most difficult part is that I do not know you, the Fraternity, like Elizabeth did. I have had great help from Richard Morton about who to tap for articles and I do appreciate that. Now I need your help.

We want to find the writers who assisted Elizabeth. We want to discover new writers. We want to continue to enable this newsletter to grow into a communication tool that will make us all closer as brothers and sisters in Francis and Christ. Write or phone with your ideas and input.

Peace & all good,  
Patti Normile, NAFRA Newsletter  
609 Amherst Ave., Terrace Park, O.45174  
(513/831/6575 or FAX 513/831-2804)

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