

Book Reviews

Our SFO History – Volume I

A History of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States Volume I 1917 – 1942

By William Wicks, SFO

The history of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States begins with the immigration of friars and Tertiaries from Germany during the second half of the 19th century. However, even before that time there is evidence of the friars forming Third Order fraternities among the Native Americans, and early Spanish settlers. Volume I of *A History of the Secular Order in the United States* covers, mainly, the time of the beginning of the forming of a national Third Order organization, up to the time of the Second World War.

Serious consideration of a national organization began at a meeting of friars of Sacred Heart (OFM) Province, and Tertiaries, in Teutopolis, Illinois, in 1917. The plan was supported unanimously at the first Quinquennial Congress held in Chicago in 1921, and was consummated by the approval of a national constitution in 1922. A Prologue includes a short history of immigration of Franciscans to this country and presents the positive effect of Pope Leo XIII's encyclicals on the growth of the Third Order, one of which embodies the Leonine Rule of 1883. Volume I encompasses the time of the first five Quinquennial Congresses, the fifth held in Pittsburgh in 1941. An Appendix includes encyclicals related to the Third Order promulgated by Popes: Leo XIII, Pius X, Benedict XV, and Pius XI.

This history serves two purposes. One, it presents an overall story of events that, one after the other, have contributed to where we are today. It is our history presented. Two, it gives honor to those friars who dedicated themselves to lead us to where we are today. It is their history presented.

The story of the beginnings of our national organization is a glorious one. I hope that I have done it justice.

Book may be ordered from:
Barbo-Carlson Enterprises
Box 189, Lindsborg, KS 67456 or
bevbarbo@kans.com

Reflections of a Secular Franciscan Books I & II

By Ruth Vogel, SFO
(January 21, 1910 – May 26, 1998)

By Dennis Mallon, SFO

The writings of Ruth Vogel, SFO, are now available in two paperback books. Her first book titled "Reflections of a Secular Franciscan, Book I" is a collection of writings dedicated to inquirers, candidates, and professed Franciscans. Her writings were used in formation by her fraternity, and other fraternities and seminars in the Southern Region. Ruth wrote many articles for other Franciscan publications, as well as the "Franciscan Herald."

In her first book, for candidates and ongoing formation, Ruth brings to light her reflections on the "The Secular Franciscan Order," where she traces a brief history of the Order; describes basic requirements such as the importance of Meetings, Commitment, Life Style, and the Rule. In the second chapter, "Reflections on St. Francis and His Early Companions," Ruth's focus is on his conversion (metanoia)," The First Chapter of Mats, The Carceri, The Tau cross and the San Damiano crucifix. In the final Chapter, The Franciscan Way of Life, she offers her thoughts on such topics as Obedience, Penance, Humility, What is True Love, Formation, and Franciscan poverty.

Book II is a collection of spiritual writings, some in verse form, under topics: Jesus, Son of God; Mary Mother of God; Lent and Easter; Holy Scripture; Meditations; the Christmas Season; God's Creation and her Trip to Assisi.

In a note she wrote to our Lord she said, "Dear Lord Jesus, I would like so very much for you to tell me what you want me to do with the rest of my life, in what way I can serve you best? I must assume that since I am firmly established in this Franciscan role of instructing others in the Franciscan way, that this is the way which I must channel the most important part of my life — this role of bringing your living presence to the members of my fraternity and others where possible."

Ruth Vogel's books are available through Lulu Publications (Lulu.com) as follows: Enter in the search box for books the number 155927 for Book I and 792928 for book II. For more information contact: Dennis Mallon, SFO at denmarpar@numail.org or www.secularfranciscans.org