

## A Joyful Sense of Community

By Patrick Mendés, SFO  
National Minister

Article 13 of our Holy  
Rule reads in part,



*“A sense of community will make them joyful and ready to place themselves on an equal basis with all people...”*

Our Quinquennial Congress certainly gave us a big boost in that direction! We were indeed joyful, as we learned not only about each of our cultures and the way in which we can communicate with each other, but also in the sharing of community and celebrating who we are as Franciscans.

When the family gathers - joy spreads.

Throughout this current issue of TAU USA, there is extensive coverage of the Q, so let me limit myself to a few words of gratitude. So many people did so much to make the Q successful and joy-filled – the Quinquennial Planning Committee, the Regional Committees from Holy Trinity, and Lady Poverty Regions who prepared the welcome packets, manned the registration desk and did a myriad of other kindnesses, the brothers and sisters who entertained and educated us during the festival of cultures, our gifted speakers and incredible musicians and you, my brothers and sisters. When the family gathers - joy spreads. Who would have known what a gifted artist Rose Mary Menetrey, Holy Trinity Regional Minister is, had she not shared her painting of St. Elizabeth of Hungary with us? It was a special treat for me to get to meet so many of you for the first time and to renew acquaintances with many of you that I hadn't seen since the last Q, and a very special treat for me to see my former

Minister from our Sacred Heart Province days, Anne Kramer. (Isn't it amazing how some people never age!!!?) It was a special joy to welcome our brothers and sisters from India, Viet Nam, and Australia who came to share our time together.

Our celebrants, Bishop Conlon of Steubenville, (Opening Mass) Fr. Peter, OFM (Syro-Malabar Mass), Fr. Moises, OFM (Bilingual Spanish/English Mass) and the wonderfully wise and witty, Metropolitan Arch-bishop Basil, OFM, brought special joy to our liturgies.

To all, and I know I've only mentioned a few, who made the Q so wonderful and so memorable, my heartfelt thanks.

Looking ahead, it won't be long before the Annual NAFRA gathering takes place in Belleville, IL - hosted by St. Clare and Franciscans of the Prairie Regions.

More exciting news: St. Francis University of Loretto, PA will be offering a summer 2008, seminar on Servant Leadership. Speakers will be Fr. Bernie Tickerhoof, TOR and Anne Mulqueen, SFO. I'm really excited about this. This seminar and those in subsequent years are prepared especially for the SFO. Topics for future summer seminars will be planned with input from us, as the University wants to make the seminars truly responsive to our needs. We will solicit ideas and recommendations for topics/speakers at the annual NAFRA gatherings. The University hopes to make it an annual summer event, except during the years that we gather for the Quinquennial Congress. As we grow in our Franciscan charism and spirituality with vibrancy and joy, let us celebrate every opportunity to be Christ present to all we meet.

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus surround you with His love and fill your lives with His abundant blessings!

Quote:

Forgo anger, tobacco, intoxication and gluttony in favor of exercise, humility, charity, prayer and patience.

Fr. Nicholas Kao Se-Tsean, (110 years old)