



FAN UPDATE AND THE LORETTO WORKSHOP

The main focus of the FAN meetings was to strategize about our future.

As you may know, the Franciscan Action Commission (FAN) has a monthly conference call and meets face-to-face twice a year, in March and in the fall, usually in Washington, DC. Our March meeting is always planned to coincide with Ecumenical Advocacy Days (EAD). The EAD workshops focus on a particular issue (this year immigration), giving us the opportunity to learn more about the issue so we can speak intelligently with our representatives on the Hill, whom we visit on the last day of EAD.

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This year's EAD also coincided with the Immigration Rally in Washington on Sunday, March 21. Many of us went down to the Mall for the Rally. I was shocked at the media coverage, even in Washington.

It was given, at the most, 30 seconds on the news, saying that "thousands" were demonstrating at the Mall. That was a true statement — but misleading, because one would probably think 5,000, maybe 10,000. In fact, there were 200,000 at the Mall, the largest demonstration for immigration ever, but that was never mentioned.

The experience on the Mall was unsettling. The stories told were disturbing, the anger of the people, while righteous, was also frightening. The U.S. Council of Catholic Bishops has spoken strongly in favor of comprehensive immigration reform. This problem is not going away until it's resolved.

One of the problems (*and one especially within the SFO*) is too few representatives covering too large areas. Action Circles were suggested, each made up of representatives in sections of the country. It would increase representation on the Action Commission and also give Action Commissioners a small group to work with in educating our various Franciscan communities and Franciscan-minded individuals of FAN's work and how they can participate. This is in the works and will be implemented soon.

Another activity coming out of the March meeting was a plan for civic engagement training. Called "Ours to Do," the purpose of this training is to enable grass roots efforts to participate in FAN's local and national justice, peace and care for creation efforts. Workshops will be held in three cities: Chicago, Philadelphia area and Colorado Springs in August and September. Participants will be trained to become advocates in their areas, and to teach others to become advocates, promoting Franciscan values in the public arena.

As a preview of "Ours to Do." a webinar entitled "Civility in Public Discourse" was presented on June 17, which is currently on the FAN website for viewing. Do not miss watching this webinar (*it's one hour in length*); it is very worth your time! After watching the webinar, you're invited to make the *F.R.A.N.C.I.S. Commitment*

to Civility in Public Discourse, and to send an email (or letter) to those running for election to do the same. That commitment is to:

- **F**acilitate a forum for difficult discourse and acknowledge that all dialogue can lead to new insight and mutual understanding.

- **R**espect the dignity of all people, especially the dignity of those who hold an opposing view.

- **A**udit myself and utilize terms or a vocabulary of faith to unite or reconcile rather than divide conflicting positions.

- **N**eutralize inflamed conversations by presuming that those with whom we differ are acting in good faith.

- **C**ollaborate with others and recognize that all human engagement is an opportunity to promote peace.

- **I**dentify common ground such as similar values or concerns and utilize this as a foundation to build upon.

- **S**upport efforts to clean up the provocative language by calling policymakers to their sense of personal integrity.

Other information on the FAN web site that you should check out at: www.franciscanaction.org includes:

- A letter sent to President Obama regarding immigration reform, signed by nearly 50 Franciscan communities and organizations.
- Responses to the Gulf oil disaster, including prayers that can be used at community gatherings — or within the Prayers of the Faithful at your parish.

- FAN's accomplishments in the first quarter of 2010 (Spring Highlights).
- Various White Papers, including the latest by Fr. Joe Nangle, OFM on Mission.

FAN, of course, was not the sponsor of the SFO Workshop at Loretto, PA in June, St. Francis University was. However, Fr. Joe Nangle, OFM, Secretary-Treasurer of the FAN's Board of Directors, was one of the presenters, the other being Pat Brandwein-Ball, the immediate past-JPIC Councilor of NAFRA.

Here's a quick summary of the workshop which was, in my opinion, simply excellent:

- Fr. Joe gave us a history of Catholic social teaching, not only the documents that have come down over the past 120 years, but also how changing times and needs were graces by which the Holy Spirit engages us to live the Gospel and care for our brothers and sisters.

- Both Pat and Fr. Joe spoke about the spirituality of social justice. It is a response to our faith, not an obligation to be fulfilled.
- Pat reviewed Chapter 2 of our Rule, telling us to look for the verbs to understand how to live the Rule.
- Pat facilitated a discussion regarding the transition from apostolic commissions to JPIC, explaining that we are called to continue to work in apostolic activities, but the motivation must flow from our living the Rule rather than taking on a project. She also explained that the acronym "JPIC" was the new term for us for apostolic work mainly because it is the term used by the rest of the Franciscan family and as we work more and more together, it's well to use the same terminology.
- Pat introduced the mission statement for JPIC which has been approved by NAFRA:

The mission of JPIC is to assist Professed Secular Franciscans as they reflect on their relationship with God as manifested in the fruits of conversion in their lives. This with special regard to the daily choices made in the areas of justice, peacemaking and respect for all created things and people; as brothers and sisters of penance, bringing life to the Gospel and the Gospel to life.

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- Pat mentioned that she was stepping down as JPIC Councilor as of June 30, 2010. NAFRA has since announced that Kent Ferris, SFO, will succeed Pat.

(See page 21 to "meet" newly appointed National JPIC Chair, Kent Ferris, SFO)

- The workshop in 2011 will focus on "Aspects of Fraternity Life" with presenters Fr. Lester Bach, OFM Cap and Mary Bittner, SFO.



Quinquennial XVIII

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Budding Creative Designers Take Note:

Start warming up the ole thinking caps, and let your creative juices start flowing...

The Quinquennial (Q) 2012 planning committee will soon be launching a national contest for the "Q" 2012 art/logo.

Look for further details in the upcoming issues of TAU-USA.